

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI[®]

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences



THESIS ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE

The undersigned, appointed by the

Division

Department

Committee

of Social Anthropology and the Study of Religion

have examined a thesis entitled

Wolves at the Door:

Existential Solidarity in a Globalizing Sweden

presented by

Brian Charles William Palmer

candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and hereby
certify that it is worthy of acceptance.

Signature 

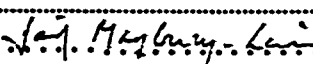
Typed name Prof. Harvey G. Cox

Signature 

Typed name Prof. Diana L. Eck

Signature 

Typed name Prof. Michael Herzfeld

..... 

Prof. David H. P. Maybury-Lewis

Date

September 11, 2000

Wolves at the Door:
Existential Solidarity in a Globalizing Sweden

A thesis presented

by

Brian Charles William Palmer

to

The Committee of Social Anthropology
and the Study of Religion

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
Social Anthropology and the Study of Religion

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

September, 2000

UMI Number: 9988585

Copyright 2000 by
Palmer, Brian Charles William

All rights reserved.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 9988585

Copyright 2001 by Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

© 2000 Brian Charles William Palmer
All rights reserved.

Prof. Michael Herzfeld
Prof. Harvey Cox

Brian Charles William Palmer

Wolves at the Door:

Existential Solidarity in a Globalizing Sweden

This ethnographic study looks at how socially engaged Swedes work to uphold egalitarian values and institutions in the face of what they see as the merciless indifference of a market-driven era. I document and analyze the social imagination of urban, middle-class Swedes who are dissenters in an increasingly neoliberal national and global order. How do they draw upon cultural idioms of equality? How do they articulate and seek to practice an ethic of solidarity?

The first chapter introduces my hosts and recounts my multi-sited fieldwork. In Chapter 2, I explore twentieth-century foreign portrayals of Sweden as a utopia or dystopia. To scrutinize two famous accounts of the nation, I draw upon Michael Herzfeld's conception of social poetics. Chapter 3 deals with collective expectations and constraints in Swedish everyday life. I examine canons of behavior with regard to personal modesty, income and consumption, prostitution and pornography, and traffic safety. Such codes reveal the social construction of

habits of conscientiousness that are essential to a solidaristic community. In Chapter 4, I analyze the inventive public dramatizations through which left-leaning Swedes depict a gentle general-welfare society beleaguered by neoliberal profiteers. The final chapter traces the history and uses of the word "solidarity," while also providing two portraits of solidarity in practice -- one exploring the public promotion of children's well-being, the other relating the story of a young Swedish internationalist.

In closing, I argue that the existential solidarity of socially concerned Swedes may be understood as the making of human sacredness by means of (1) connective attention, (2) material sharing, (3) the staging of equality, and (4) the acknowledgment of human vulnerability. This definition frames solidarity as an act of classification -- a reclassifying of categorical outsiders as insiders who are entitled to participate in societal networks of reciprocity and care. Such reclassifications take place through a staging of equality, a dramatized acting as if people were already equal. Sweden's champions of solidarity thus challenge neoliberal globalization with a vision of, and a path toward, a common humanity.

Wolves at the Door:**Existential Solidarity in a Globalizing Sweden****Contents**

Acknowledgments	vi
Chapter 1. Anticipations	1
Chapter 2. Slightly Imaginary Sweden: Rumors of Utopia	41
Chapter 3. Repressing Aggressors: The Culture of Gentleness	100
Chapter 4. "Euroclass" Sweden and Its Dissenters	171
Chapter 5. Existential Solidarity: The Making of Human Sacredness	209
References	256

Acknowledgments

This thesis is a study of solidarity, but it is also a product of solidarity. I have been aided so generously, by so many people, that it is only through an act of cosmic myopia that I can inscribe my name alone, and not a hundred names, on the cover.

My two dissertation advisors, Michael Herzfeld and Harvey Cox, have guided me through my academic apprenticeship with attentive ears, animated minds, and wise words. I admire them as teachers and as men, and I hope, in my own career, to emulate their example of largeheartedness.

Other Harvard scholars also supported my research and discussed Sweden with me over many enjoyable hours. These include Diana Eck and David Maybury-Lewis, who were members of my examining committee, as well as Annette Johansson-Los, Stephen Mitchell, Elaine Scarry, Brita Stendahl, and Krister Stendahl.

Three of my graduate years were spent in Sweden. My host at the University of Uppsala, Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm, never stinted in his intellectual support.

Åke Daun, Hedda Ekerwald, Ulf Hannerz, Barbro Klein, and Orvar Löfgren also generously invited me into their academic worlds.

Several organizations have financed my various research projects in Sweden. I thank the American-Scandinavian Foundation (and Ellen McKey there), the Fulbright Commission (and Jeannette Lindström), the Council for European Studies (and Ioannis Sinanoglou), the Lois Roth Endowment (and Richard Arndt), the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in conjunction with the Swedish Institute, the Frederick Sheldon Fund, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and the Roothbert Fund.

In the making of every dissertation are moments of distress, but I was blessed by friends who were ready to rescue me with long hours of intellectual and practical first aid. Three heroes among them were Al Burke, Veronika Cveckova, and Anna Portnoy.

Scholarly work is at once solitary and profoundly collective, and there are many others -- allies and ethnographic informants -- who deserve hearty thanks:

Birgitta Albons, Sara Andersson, Gösta Arvastson, Dil Bach, Christine Barklund, Fredrik Barth, Ingrid Bartholomew,

Gunilla Baumann, Stina Bengs, Barbro Blehr, Mattias Blom, Sissela Bok, Kristina Boréus, Peter Bratt, Carole Bundy, Gunilla Byrman, Carl Carlson, Charlotte Chiu, Paul Claesson, Robert Coles, Birgitta Collin, Shawn Cooper, Alan Crozier, Ulrika Dahl, Paul Dhalla, Marjatta Eilittä, Pär Ekblom, Christer Eldh, Jonas Engman, Victoria Lee Erickson, Anne-Louise Eriksson, Magnus Falklöf, Marna Feldt, John Fiske, Kathy Fitzgerald, Björn Fjärstedt, Nina Forssblad, Anne Freschette, Erica Fältdt, Mary Garrison, Anna Gavanas, Åsa Geivall, William Graham, Cristina Grenholm, Marianne Gullestad, Anders Gunnartz, Eva Gustafsson, Lotten Gustafsson, Leif Gustavsson, Anna-Maria Hagerfors, Olle Hagman, Elisabeth Hartmann, Kenneth Hermele, Jeannine Hill-Fletcher, Jens Holm, Krister Holmgren, Sara Hultman, Saga-Lena Höglin, Birgitta Hörnström, Dale Irwin, Kit Jaeger, Ylva Jansson, Anders Jeffner, the late Anneli Karlsson, Pia Karlsson, Paul Kessel, Eva Kodrou, Bo Kärre, Karin Larsson, Bengt Liljenroth, Jenny Lindahl, Lori Lindahl, Inger Lindroth, Charlotta Ljungberg, Olle Lundberg, Anna Lundström, Tommy Löfgren, Ami Lönroth, Thomas Malaby, Lotta Mannerfelt, Simone Mantei, Eva Markstedt, Brian Martin, Pia Maybury-Lewis, Peter Mayers, Mary McGee, Britt Molander, Gunilla Molloy, Cinzia Monteleone, Sally Falk Moore, Patricia Moreno, Carina Mostböck, Mikael Mögren, Randi Myhre, Ralph Nader, Anita Nilsson, Maria Nilsson, Karin Norman, Hanna Nyberg, Kristina Nyström, Tom O'Dell, Don Odom, Antoinetta Oppenheimer, Lisbet Palme, Angelique Paquaÿ, Bosse Parbring, Gustav Peebles, Michele Pekar-Lempereur, Olle Persson, Thorleif Pettersson, Ralph Potter, Paul Psychas, Sanjay Reddy, Chip Robinson, Anna Rolander, Henrik Rosén, Risa Rosenberg, Iman Roushdy, Eva Roxeheim, Maria Rud, Charlotta Rüegger, Arne Ruth, Lise-Lotte Ryberg,

Ninna Rösiö, Claire Sahlin, Lena Sawyer, Kerstin Schmidt, Eva Schmitsdorf, Johan von Schreeb, Constanze Schwan, Eskil Selander, Ingrid Maria Seth, the late Julia Shaffner, Gunilla Silfverberg, Annick Sjögren, Carl Solberg, Rickard Sollman, Inger Stark, Malin Stawe, Michaël Stenberg, Mikael Stenmark, Pelle Strindlund, Anne Elisabeth Strom, Ulrika Strömbom, Margaret Studier, Lotta Soares-Masar, Lawrence Sullivan, Lena Sundström, Louise Sylwander, Maria Södling, Gunnar Sörum, Tiina Torm, Camilla Townsend, Hasse Tullberg, Rita Tullberg, Ricardo Vargas-Fuentes, Joachim Vogel, Margit Warburg, Ian Watson, Jenny Watson-Madler, Boudewijn Wegerif, Laurie Weinstein, Tor Wennerberg, Johanna Westeson, Anders Westius, Unni Wikan, Agnes Wirén, Shang-Ying Xu, Anders Zellman, the thirty-three Dagens Nyheter readers who sent me their thoughts about solidarity in response to an article, and my students in Uppsala and at Harvard.

My family has sustained me with camaraderie, humor and love. To my amazing sister, Cynthia Palmer Olsen, this thesis is dedicated.

Author's Contact Address

Readers are invited to contact me with comments or queries.

By e-mail (recommended): bpalmer@post.harvard.edu

By regular mail: Brian Palmer
 Religion/Barker Center
 Harvard University
 12 Quincy Street
 Cambridge, MA 02138-3879 USA

Chapter 1. Anticipations

We human beings are minuscule creatures, surviving in an enormous cosmic universe, on a small planet, without knowing the reason why; and sooner or later we will all be annihilated. The conditions we live in are hard, and despite all religious public conveniences, all of us are prey to painful anxiety and fear -- fear of the dark, the nothingness, the infinity at the beginning and at the end of this short episode we call life. . . . Our only certainty is that we all share the same miserable conditions. We have one another, we have a little company, to carry us through the episode of life.

- Lars Ullerstam (1966:163-164)

This dissertation concerns the transformation of "minuscule creatures," vulnerable and alone, into socially sheltered beings who are secure and free. "As an individual

I am lame," Karl Marx (1963:191) once wrote, "but money provides me with twenty-four legs. Therefore, I am not lame." I would remember these words in the parks and museums, the libraries and schools of Stockholm, as I encountered severely disabled persons and their attendants. One day there would be a stroke-stricken elderly man, another day a young girl with a face half-frozen by some affliction. Accompanying each wheelchair-occupant was a public servant. What Marx (1963:192) called "the visible deity" may work its restorative magic in the private utopia of an ample fortune, but the daily spectacle of these mobile quadriplegics made clear that the god-like force of money can also serve a wider commonwealth. As an individual I am lame, but society provides me with twenty-four legs.

It was to understand such communal miracles that I had come to Sweden. How and why does a society provide the lame with extra legs, the poor with extra money, or battered children with an ombudsman to safeguard their well-being? How do people practice solidarity, and at what price? On the United Nations Development Programme's Human Poverty Index -- a composite index of deprivation, ordered least to most -- Sweden ranks first in the world (UNDP 1999:149). Who has

wanted a society of that sort? What contests will determine its future course?

The UNDP ranking may mark Sweden as the earth's most sheltering society, but the 1990s were a decade of global neoliberal ascendancy, even in Sweden.¹ Recalling Abraham Lincoln's (1953:23) words about a different democratic experiment, one may look upon the Sweden of social concern and wonder "whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure."

High-voltage hosts

"This is not our country!" declared Lotta as she sat silhouetted in pensive intensity against a wall of framed photographs of James Dean, Marilyn Monroe and Mohammed Ali. Lotta and I were in a central Stockholm café (hence the

¹ Neoliberalism may be described as the political philosophy favoring deregulation of business, reduction of taxes, cutbacks in social-welfare expenditure, diminished protective measures for labor, privatization of public enterprises, and the use of monetary policy to impede inflation even if unemployment thereby rises. Swedish neoliberals flourished in the 1980s and 1990s, thanks in part to think tanks and lobby groups funded by large corporations (Elmbrant 1995:121, 184-185; Milner 1994:154; Bourdieu 1998:29-44; Runyan 1999:211).

American photographs²), conversing about the war in Bosnia over camomile tea and cinnamon-speckled, cream-oozing rolls. It was 1993.

"It's not our own country!" she reiterated. "There's nothing that makes it ours. And they're dying somewhere else." Lotta sought to uproot the assumption that Sweden is the exclusive property of its current inhabitants. She felt that any former Yugoslavians in need of a safe haven should be permitted to come to Sweden; other countries had been stingy about letting them in.

"Wouldn't that be terribly expensive?" I objected. Lotta said that there would of course be significant costs, but even if Swedes all had to live more modestly for a while, they would manage; for example, she felt that she had space enough in her apartment for a Bosnian woman or two. If she and her compatriots refused to bear the costs, she added, people would die.

² As a popular joke puts it: "Sweden is the most Americanized country in the world, with the United States running a close
(continued...)

Lotta's wish was disappointed: Sweden made no such vastly inclusive offer of shelter to those wanting to escape the war.³ To those in charge, Lotta's proposal was politically unthinkable. The nation nonetheless accepted more ex-Yugoslavian refugees, in relation to population, than any other affluent country did -- if far fewer than Lotta had intended. Meanwhile, the gulf between conditions in a supremely organized Sweden and those in a bloodied Bosnia continued to haunt many Swedes.

A reminder of that gulf caught my attention in 1995, as I performed my daily ritual of newspaper-reading ("a substitute for morning prayers" [Anderson 1991:35, following Hegel]). On the front page of Sweden's leading paper was a photograph of two children standing in a Bosnian cemetery. "Mama is dead," read the caption. Next to a squat black tombstone, Vladana Vasic, age seven, hugged her little brother Bojan, three and a half. He was shorter than she and

second." (For analyses of Americanization in Sweden, see O'Dell 1997; Lundén and Åsard 1992.)

³ What Lotta and most of her compatriots saw as a morally obligatory act of hospitality, a vocal minority framed as an encroachment upon the home. Thus one anonymous letter-writer who opposed acceptance of refugees wrote to a journalist that Sweden will be swarmed by ten million Chinese and "you will have to live in one corner of the kitchen" (Carl Z 1995).

wrapped his arms around her waist, while her own small forearms supported his head. "Their mama," the caption continued, "was killed by a grenade two years ago and lies buried in the cemetery in Sarajevo. Bojan still refuses to comprehend it" (Gustafsson 1995:A1).

My host, Gunilla, joined me in looking at this picture, placed between the rolls and yogurt of her kitchen table. "Couldn't we have done something about this?" she asked. "Couldn't these kids and their mother have waited out the war in Sweden?"

For Gunilla, Lotta, and many other socially concerned Swedes whom I have come to know, it is the scantiness or absence of organized endeavors to protect the Vladanas and Bojans of the world (including those of Sweden) that most affronts the conscience and saddens the heart. These engaged individuals support international aid efforts and defend the general-welfare society against neoliberal incursions. They maintain that the agonies of inequality and war are largely unnecessary, that it is within our collective human capacities to mitigate them, and that we are obliged to do so to the full extent of our powers. This is the responsibility, they suggest, of all who have a secure existence toward all who do not.

Such left-leaning Swedes often express horror over what they see as today's profit-chasing, debt-enslaving, election-buying, child-exploiting, animal-wounding world. Their stance of social criticism, in its broad outlines, is something that they share with people of the left from Santiago to Blackpool to Berkeley, who similarly lament a world of beggars and billionaires, hunger and hydrogen bombs. Throughout the affluent world, dissenters are often transfixed by what Daniel Singer (1999:275) calls "the contrast between our fantastic technological ability and the absurdity of our social organization." Thus my Swedish hosts have much in common with wider transnational social networks. What may be distinctively their own will become apparent in the course of this ethnography.

Certain common preoccupations characterize my Swedish informants. None approve of what they see as Sweden's move toward a more American-style economy, a "winner-take-all society" (Frank and Cook 1995) with windfalls for the well-situated and insecurity for the rest. More generally, they ruminate on practical problems of human interdependence. Like Lotta in her abovementioned opposition to a property-rights conception of nationhood, they are absorbed by the

question of how the world and its bounties can best be shared.

I write about people who, in their diverse forms of dissent, are theorists and practitioners of "solidarity" -- a venerable political watchword whose Swedish form (solidaritet) bears some culturally specific connotations (see Chapter 5). The individuals I got to know best are urban, middle-class twenty- and thirty-somethings, many of whom support the Left Party or the Green Party. In addition to participant observation and taped interviews with thirty-two core informants, I draw heavily upon journalistic, literary and ethnographic writings, thereby relying on others to extend my own powers of perception and interpretation. To my hosts and to the writers whom I cite, I owe a large debt of gratitude.

My informants may be described as unsung public intellectuals, well-read and reflective individuals who attempt to influence others by means of speech and writing. They often participate in societal debates in the course of their daily work -- as journalists, editors, activists, university students, professors, press secretaries, political-party representatives, trade-unionists, doctors and

ministers. Their political passions span both work and leisure.

It is my Swedish hosts' social imagination that interests me most. By "social imagination" I mean their ways of conceiving of society -- what it is and what it might become. "But the action of the imagination," Elaine Scarry (1985:306) observes, "is mysterious, invisible, and only disclosed in the material and verbal residues" that the imagination leaves behind. Anthropologists, unlike novelists, are professionally disinclined to speculate about the intrapsychic lives of other individuals (Herzfeld 1997b:25). Thus a study of "social imagination" is, in the first instance, a study not of incorporeal mind but of action in the world. The way my hosts imagine societal possibilities becomes visible in what they do -- with words, with daily routines, with one another.

A significant species of action for my Swedish associates is the effort to persuade others to support a solidaristic society. This endeavor might in any era be important for morally animated advocates of the left; but it assumes added urgency at a historical moment when Sweden's general-welfare state is (as my hosts perceive it) beset by neoliberalism and wounded in its internationalist

aspirations. "For morality life is a war," William James (1985:45) once reflected, "and the service of the highest is a sort of cosmic patriotism which also calls for volunteers."

In coming to the defense of a beleaguered morality of equality and solidarity, my hosts find themselves in a struggle that requires their full imaginative resources. How do they dramatize the consequences of the divergent paths that their country could follow? How do they call attention to and interpret what they see as the past decade's ballooning income inequalities and concomitant secession of the rich into private orbits of privilege? How do they attempt to generate empathy and generosity toward refugees, the homeless, the unemployed and others deemed useless by the market? Communicative endeavors like these -- the secular evangelism of the socially concerned -- are situated in particular cultural timespaces; it will be my job, in the chapters that follow, to delineate that context and thereby "illuminate the social constraints on individual action" (Herzfeld 1997b:25).

To make sense of my hosts' work, I draw upon the method that Michael Herzfeld calls "social poetics" (see Chapter 2). This is a particular "analytic approach to the uses of rhetorical form"; it directs the beam of its interpretive

spotlight at nonverbal as well as verbal practices, based on a "conviction that social relations themselves constitute a kind of discourse" (Herzfeld 1997a:142, 1985:xv). By means of this approach, it becomes possible to understand an act of dietary scrupulosity, for example, as no less rhetorical than the commentary that may accompany it: both draw upon existing conventions of meaning, and both flourish or falter as persuasive endeavors according to how aptly they rework those conventions in a particular context.

In lieu of a method

"What three words," inquires a contemporary joke, "does a reflexive anthropologist never say?" The answer: "Enough about me..." The joke (which I heard told at the 1998 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association) expresses apprehension regarding ethnographers who write extensively about their own experiences. Such autobiographical volubility is often labeled "self-indulgent": the authors appear to take pleasure in trumpeting their personal histories, and many readers would prefer to be spared the encounter.

I have no illusions that my own narcissism is more palatable than anyone else's, and I seek to avoid unnecessary self-disclosure in these pages. But I am convinced that self-description is often necessary, if ethnography is to accomplish what I see as its purpose of enabling people both to engage in critical self-scrutiny and to "[trade] in ideas by transgressing discursive frontiers" (Eagleton 1992:83).

Arguments in favor of narrating personal experience frequently point out that self-portrayals allow readers to scrutinize the research process and to uncover faulty methods and unacknowledged biases (see Schwandt 1997:135-136). In this vein, Evans-Pritchard (1940:9) writes in his introduction to The Nuer that "it may interest readers if I give them a short description of the conditions in which I pursued my studies." Such a description, he maintains, will help readers "to decide which statements are likely to be based on sound observation and which to be less well-grounded." He goes on to depict his sometimes muddled interactions with his servants and hosts (Evans-Pritchard 1940:9-15) -- a discussion that reveals much about the qualities of character he values (notably tenacity in the face of obstacles), his research methods (including his

reliance on one particularly supportive Nuer boy), and the colonial circumstances in which he worked.

In a similar vein but half a century later, Roger Lancaster asserts the importance of detailing his interactions with his hosts. He maintains that "the disappearing or absent author/interviewer . . . whose very presence is repressed in the final text" is the "most distorting device of all" (Lancaster 1992:109). To avoid such distortion in his ethnography, he has "everywhere tried to keep a sense of what circumstances motivated and what questions prompted a given discussion" (Lancaster 1992:109-110). He also seeks to attend to the "disorderly, trivial, or personal" aspects of life that are often omitted from narratives written with "the authoritative voice of Science" (Lancaster 1992:xvi).

Another potential advantage of thick self-description (cf. Geertz 1973:9-10) is that it makes ethnography more "dialogical"; it fosters "a conversation between peoples and cultures" (Lancaster 1992:301). By depicting our own trajectories, we sustain our side of the conversation, thus fulfilling "part of the necessary requirements for intersubjectivity" (Lancaster 1992:204). The elucidation of our own views honors "our hosts' wish to be treated as moral

equals," persons whose presence -- as conversation partners or readers -- does not elicit from us a condescending silence (Herzfeld 1997a:167). Moreover, an abundance of detail about our own "cultural engagement" (Herzfeld 1997a:3) empowers our ethnographic interlocutors to analyze us -- sometimes in ways that we never intended.

Let me, then, offer some self-disclosure (or, as Geertz [2000:8] quips, an exercise in "crafted candor and public self-concealment") in the hope that it prompts both criticism of my work and border-crossing dialogue. I begin by narrating the genesis of my interest in Sweden. Then I describe my fieldwork and writing, noting several shortcomings of each. Finally, the chapter closes with an overview of the remainder of the thesis.

There were only a few traces of Sweden in my childhood. I am not of Swedish descent -- unlike a large proportion of the American researchers working on studies of Sweden. During my early years, my parents owned a curvaceous second-hand Volvo, out of whose clamp-opened back windows my sister and I would toss playing cards as we all drove from Brooklyn to Cape Cod on our annual holiday. Later, around 1980, Swedish postcards came into vogue in the artsy card-and-poster shops of lower Manhattan. A friend gave me one, which

bore an image of an urban idyll; the painter (B. Hinders) re-imagined an old-fashioned Swedish street in extravagant colors that might have been lifted from a Beatles film. On the back (for I still have the card), my friend had written: "I want to live here. Sometimes I think I already do. At least I can pretend."

These fragments of memory pale before the event that put Sweden on the celestial map for me: a meeting in 1984 with Olof Palme, the Swedish prime minister, as described below. Palme had been not only a leader in Sweden but also an initiator of nuclear disarmament efforts and a peace negotiator in the war between Iran and Iraq. He had earlier become both famous and infamous for his bold opposition to the American war in Indochina.

Olof Palme was assassinated less than two years after our paths had crossed. For the tenth anniversary of that still-unsolved murder, editor Arne Ruth asked me to write a remembrance for the culture pages of the Dagens Nyheter newspaper. The essay that resulted (Palmer 1996c) gushes with admiration, but I include it here in an English version because it reveals much about my own ideological location. Moreover, I suspect that my enthusiasm for Palme's Sweden -- as an alternative to Reagan's America -- was partially

representative of a broader foreign idealization of Sweden that also had consequences within Sweden (a theme to be revisited in Chapter 2). Palme is widely but not universally revered among today's left-oriented Swedes; most would concur with his vision of society as guarantor of social and economic security, which I describe below.

As we finished our sherbet in an oak-paneled Harvard dining room one spring evening in 1984, my friend asked whether I would be going to Olof Palme's talk. Knowing little of Sweden and nothing of Palme, I answered that I had a paper due the next day and was too busy to go. We were both sophomores, but my dinner companion knew more about the world than I did. Sweden, he told me, is a very great country, and Palme a very great man. I decided to attend.

Sitting in the ARCO Forum -- the auditorium bears the name of the oil company -- I watched the Swedish prime minister stride in. Many academic celebrities sat in the front row, and several were greeted by Palme's warm smile. He began his speech by quoting Bruno Kreisky, the Austrian social

democrat.⁴ It gradually became clear to me that Palme was not one of the run-of-the-mill heads-of-state who pass through Harvard from time to time. He was less a politician than a crusader against the hardhearted spirit of the age, and he seemed confident that he -- that we -- could win.

This was 1984, amidst the glory days of the Reagan Revolution. Our nation was carrying out its greatest arms buildup since the Second World War, much to the benefit of industry. Ever since Reagan's inaugural -- at which millionaire guests had caused a traffic jam of limousines -- to be poor was a disgrace, to be black was no longer beautiful, to be on the left was immaturity. Harvard bided this pitiless conservative storm as a battered liberal island; fittingly enough, the university's president was the son-in-law of Alva and Gunnar Myrdal, two great architects of Sweden's general-welfare society.

⁴ The full texts of this and other Palme speeches were collected posthumously by a publishing house in New Delhi, India (Palme 1990: 63-77).

My heroes at that time were Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and something about Palme recalled those slain leaders. I think it was his unfathomable hopefulness, his confidence that we could create a life-affirming world in spite of the forces poised to crush us. Palme's uncanny mix of determination and faith had also characterized King, who once declared: "I may not get there with you, but we as a people will get to the Promised Land."

To deliver his vision of hope, Palme first made clear that he was no stranger to sorrow; he had seen it again and again. He quoted a young woman he had met at a Swedish employment office, who was futilely interviewing for jobs. "Sometimes they say they will call me. So I go home and wait for them to call, but they never do. This has happened to me fifty or sixty times." It is not surprising, Palme observed, that unemployment begets broken families, prostitution, drug use and suicide.

For Palme, the highway out of hopelessness was called democracy. This was a time when U.S.

conservatives described government as the enemy: "get government off our backs" was their rallying cry. Against this backdrop, it was invigorating to hear Palme speak of politics as a worthy and necessary collaborative project. We should all "take a share in being responsible for the common good."

"The aim of society and of solidarity," Palme continued, "is that everyone shall have access to resources so that they will be able to realize the essential undertakings of human life, the great life projects." He enumerated some of these life projects: "to grow up and be educated; to find playmates and friends; . . . to find a place in working life and make our own living; to find somewhere to live and make it into a home; to form a family and bring up children; . . . to secure a decent living and preserve our dignity for the inevitable frailty of old age."

The list sounds pretty ordinary to me now, but in 1984 it haunted me. That was a year in which President Reagan poured money into planning a giant nuclear-powered shield in outer space, to defend

our country in an apocalyptic war. Meanwhile, the numbers both of homeless persons and of billionaires grew exponentially. It was a dark time.

The self-confident, warm, animated man at the podium offered a vision of something better. Like American conservatives, Palme esteemed private life, the "little world" of family and friends. But he realized that a vibrant democracy was a necessary prerequisite to a thriving familial life. If we work together, we can build a society in which it is possible to live the dream of intimacy and involvement. For me, this brought to mind a loving spouse, two kids, a Volvo (the car of choice in Cambridge), and an active role as a citizen. Only an inclusive welfare society, Palme believed, allows all its members the security, and thus the freedom, necessary to build a strong family rooted in community.

Palme's talk of "the great life projects" thus reiterated an old and sober version of the American Dream. That dream, the late historian Christopher Lasch has shown, was originally not about the

sudden acquisition of wealth but about participation in a society of equals.⁵ It is no small irony that a Swedish Social Democrat so eloquently championed the American Dream at a time when our patriotic president -- by dismantling our social security (trygghet) -- was making it harder than ever to live the dream.

No wonder, then, that Palme became a hero for me and many others who heard him on that April evening. Like King, he had shown us the promised land, albeit in a modest and practical incarnation. Krister Stendahl, former bishop of Stockholm, told me that the Harvard speech revealed a side of Palme that many Swedes never saw. Stendahl said that at Harvard, beyond the bickering of Swedish party politics, one realized that "Palme was not a party politician but a statesman . . . he was someone you felt spoke out of conviction and not out of calculation, and in that sense was trustworthy."

After the speech was over, I thanked Olof Palme before heading home along John F. Kennedy

⁵ Lasch 1995:50-79.

Street. One is not touched by a great spirit without changing one's course. The coming years saw me working at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and then doing research on Swedish conceptions of solidarity and community.

It was while doing that research that I once encountered another leader of Palme's moral stature. After his Nobel Peace Prize ceremonies in Oslo, a beaming Nelson Mandela was honored by solidarity groups in Stockholm's concert house. "Sweden was with us from the very beginning," Mandela declared, and "no other nation assisted the South African freedom struggle more than Sweden did." It would have been hard to imagine a better thank-you to the thousands of Swedes who had, at one time or another, stood on street-corners handing out flyers and collecting coins against apartheid. Legions of those foot-soldiers of solidarity were present in the concert hall, and many were weeping with joy. Yet the standard-bearer of solidarity lay three blocks away in a graveyard. I remember wishing that Palme could have heard Mandela's thank-you.

During Palme's Harvard speech, I imagined that I might one day seek to work as a member of his staff. Instead, two years after he was murdered, I began a Fulbright year at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, as noted above. This was primarily a center for scholars and policy-makers, but the theme of my research -- unilateral disarmament initiatives -- involved me in peace-movement circles and introduced me to some of the people important to my eventual dissertation fieldwork.

The following four summers gave me opportunities to return to Sweden, first as a travel writer for Let's Go: Europe, then as a language student in the city of Uppsala and in the provinces of Blekinge and Jämtland. These sojourns included preliminary fieldwork, such as a week living with disarmament activists under a tarpaulin outside Saab's military-aircraft factory in Linköping.

Particularly memorable was a visit to a family whose members were attempting to dwell outside the cosmos of contemporary capitalism. That family -- parents and their two children -- lived in a wooden bungalow on a rocky lakeshore in the province of Värmland. They used hardly any money, relying instead on the vegetables they grew and the services they bartered with friends and neighbors. The

mother of the two children did in fact work for money part-time, in a government office, as they had found that they could not manage with no cash at all. The father had once walked from Stockholm to Rome to protest the world's idolatry of wealth and concomitant refusal to share with those in need. He had also staged protests at commercial banks in Karlstad and Stockholm. Sometimes this had lead to his arrest, as when he announced that he would smash the plate-glass window of a particular bank with a sledgehammer -- and then proceeded to do so.

Over simple vegetarian meals, I was struck by the attentiveness with which the members of this family listened and replied to each other; I found myself wondering how the gold-skinned six-year-old daughter would manage in the rougher world outside. The little son had Down's syndrome, and I learned that the society often considered to be the world's best in its support for the disabled was by no means good enough. The father also talked with me about his social vision, which he derived in part from Mahatma Gandhi's ideal of interdependent, self-governing villages, and from Henry David Thoreau's meditative stay at Walden Pond. These were figures close to my heart; Thoreau had lived not far from my Massachusetts home. It was only the occasional reference to

zodiacal constellations that struck me as hard to comprehend, as when my host used planetary positions to explain why my relationship with a beloved had not worked out.

Another memorable visit brought me to a tiny trailer outside Gothenburg. This was the permanent address of a teacher and activist, Randi, and her partner. (I had met Randi at the protest encampment outside the fighter-plane factory.) The couple treated me to a scrumptious vegetarian meal, but it was not their unstinting hospitality that preoccupied me. Rather, I found myself wondering how they manage their life of voluntary simplicity. How could two people choose to inhabit such a small space, relying on a shared toilet and shower in a neighboring building? They could have afforded better.

As the three of us sat huddled around the trailer's flimsy fold-out table, the discussion turned to matters of national boundaries and the global distribution of wealth. Could one imagine a Sweden that opened its borders to refugees and sought to share resources according to need? Oh yes, replied Randi. Not one to be greedy, she said that in such a Sweden she would be willing to accept a simpler lifestyle and a more modest abode.

My hosts during eighteen months of Stockholm-based fieldwork (1993-95) were seldom quite so unconventional in lifestyle as Randi or my Värmland hosts. Many of those I interviewed were associated with the Left Party, while others worked for humanitarian and advocacy organizations such as Swedish Church Aid, Doctors Without Borders, the Stockholm City Mission, and the Red Cross. Also included were journalists at Dagens Nyheter, leaders of the nurses' union, officials of the Swedish International Development Authority, self-employed actors, a high-school principal, and Sweden's Ombudsman for Children's Rights, among others. My unwitting tendency was to do taped interviews with persons in recognized institutional roles, while spending the bulk of my time among younger, less established, more activism-oriented individuals.

The formal interviews often took place in my respondents' offices, while the less ceremonious interactions were at such locations as the solidarity movement's house (Solidaritetshuset) on Stockholm's south island, the Left Party book-café in Uppsala, election-campaign cottages

(valstugor)⁶ on city streets, university seminar rooms, municipal conference halls (Folkets hus), Church of Sweden retreat centers, churches, street-theater venues, protest sites outside embassies and government offices, and the private homes of acquaintances. Discussions over shared meals also took place in my own Swedish residences, which included three apartments belonging to friends (in ritzy central Stockholm, affluent suburban Bromma, and working-class Högdalen), two university student-houses, two folk colleges, and a traditionalist Christian seminary.

My discussions with my hosts reminded me that fieldwork is often a comedy of errors. One instance was a conference called "Can we afford solidarity?" at a Swedish Church center in the town of Rättvik. A woman who was back from assignments in impoverished lands described the sort of solidarity work that she felt was needed. I wanted her to reflect also on her reasons for undertaking her dangerous and poorly paid endeavors, so I asked, in Swedish: "Why should we

⁶ Before each election, political parties construct hundreds of small wooden huts on the street corners and in the public squares of cities and towns across Sweden. Volunteers from the parties staff the huts, distributing campaign literature and conversing with interested citizens. But these campaign huts may be a vestige of the pre-television era, and they are losing significance.

be solidaristic?" With proper intonation, this might have sounded like the academic query that it was; but my novice diction led her to believe that I meant that solidarity was a bad thing. "Why do you come to a conference like this if you feel that way?" was her agitated response.

On another occasion, an Uppsala student named Stina told me her thoughts on allmansrätt, the remarkable right of common access to land in Sweden. This law makes it permissible for anyone to walk, and even to camp, on private property anywhere in the countryside; landowners are not permitted to barricade their estates.⁷ Stina kept making comparisons to Spain, where she had been appalled to see tandtråd -- dental floss -- all over the place. Despite being a frequent flosser myself, I was perplexed. I asked Stina why Spaniards littered so much dental floss, and she clarified that the word she had actually been using was taggtråd, barbed wire.

In the spirit of allmansrätt, I had free passage through the academic world during my periods of fieldwork.

⁷ For a detailed discussion of allmansrätt, see Gudrun Dahl's (1998:281-302) study of "Wildflowers, Nationalism and the Swedish Law of Commons." John Mitchell (1998) offers related reflections in an American context.

Five university departments invited me to present papers (theology and ethnology in Uppsala, anthropology and ethnology in Stockholm, ethnology in Lund). At Uppsala's program on empirisklivsåskådningsforskning -- literally the "empirical study of outlooks on life" -- my generous host, Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm, gave me the opportunity to teach a course during each of three summer terms. He also counseled me as I wrote a licentiate thesis (Palmer 1996b), for which the examiner was ethnologist Åke Daun. This was a scholar's paradise. The warm welcome resulted from the people involved, but it was perhaps also a product of a publicly supported educational system that encouraged and facilitated universal access.⁸

A post-fieldwork period at Harvard necessitated efforts to remain abreast of developments in Sweden. In the era of instantaneous communication, this proved readily feasible: by means of the Internet, I queried my former hosts, organized sessions involving Scandinavian colleagues for annual

⁸ One might compare, for example, the ease of obtaining university library cards in Sweden with their commodified nature in the United States: an outside researcher who had visited Harvard noted bitterly in his book that the size of Harvard's library holdings "is matched only by the school's determination to restrict access to them" (Kohn 1992:vi).

meetings of the American Anthropological Association, scoured the catalogs of Swedish libraries, and read Stockholm's newspapers. Although I was living in Cambridge, Massachusetts, my news sources made me feel like a citizen of Sweden: I knew all the latest gossip about the Stockholm City Council, but I could barely name the mayor of Cambridge.

My extensive use of journalistic materials deserves further comment. As Sally Falk Moore (1986:7) observes, newspapers are among the tools that provide anthropologists with "an understanding of local events in a time context." This is particularly the case in Sweden, where print journalism flourishes, editorial independence is well-guarded, and newspaper readership per capita is three times as high as in the United States (Milner 1994:112). To a great extent, newspapers in Sweden constitute the public square, the space in which collective goals are proposed and debated (see Luthersson 1998:16; Habermas 1989:181). At the center of that square stands Dagens Nyheter, a Stockholm daily with a national circulation. The largest of the morning papers (as opposed to the afternoon tabloids), Dagens Nyheter may be characterized as a cross between the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor. It mixes the former's cultural centrality regarding national news and

debate with the latter's sympathetic attention to the less-capitalized corners of the globe.

The work of journalists was not only an indispensable source of information but also an object of study in its own right, for two reasons. First, journalists were often eloquent proponents of the solidaristic ideals that had lured me to Sweden. Thus I interviewed reporters and editors at newspapers and magazines, as well as freelance writers. This latter occupational title was part of the self-descriptions of many politically engaged twenty-somethings who lacked secure institutional bases; it was an appropriate term to the extent that their activism involved the attempt to re-direct public attention by means of writing.

Second, solidarity -- in the sense of connective attention -- spans distances of space and time, and is often mediated (i.e. carried and shaped by news and other media). In our age of mass media, "contact with otherness takes place above all via the media" (Schröder 1997:127). Face-to-face interaction may be absent, as when a Swedish environmentalist buys peanut butter produced at a Tanzanian cooperative. In such instances, the moral communities that individuals seek to enact are "imagined communities" not unlike Benedict Anderson's (1991) concept of nationhood. Members of a

nation, Anderson (1991:6) observed, "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion."

Such images of communion crystallize in newspapers and other media, as Anderson (1991:32-36) recognizes. Socially-concerned reporters often champion persons who appear to have been wronged despite their membership in a presumed national or global community, thereby reaffirming the sacredness of the social bonds that were broken. Typical of such reportage is a Dagens Nyheter story of a girl with a hearing impairment who for several months was denied admission to a special-needs class. The imagining of communal responsibility is apparent from the very first sentence: "That a hearing-impaired ten-year-old should receive all conceivable help toward the best possible schooling may be considered self-evident" (Sjökvist 1994:D1). The girl did not get such help, and the journalist who defends her also defends the idea of community. The writer participates in what Emile Durkheim (1965:474-475) calls the "upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals [of] the collective sentiments and the

collective ideas which make [society's] unity and its personality." ⁹

A kingdom of imagined solidarities may thus be built by journalists and others -- but it is not without danger for an anthropologist to enter that kingdom. Like academia, journalism is a realm of what Pierre Bourdieu calls "the preconstructed," where "ready-made thoughts" tempt scholars to reproduce uncritically the perspectives of others (Bourdieu 1992:40, 44; see also Schröder 1997:127).

Prefabricated conceptions are present everywhere -- thought is ineluctably social, as Durkheim (1965:21-22) understood -- but Bourdieu feels that such conceptions are particularly concentrated in institutionally situated pieces of writing. He thus cautions that "when someone says to you, at the end of an interview, 'Ah! I have a very interesting document for you,' you should be on your guard" (Bourdieu 1992:45). Many of my interviews ended in precisely that manner.

"When one permits those whom one studies to define the terms in which they will be understood," Bruce Lincoln

⁹ Durkheim (1965:475) believed that physical proximity -- persons "closely united to one another" -- was indispensable to such reaffirmations of community. Anderson's insight, noted above, suggests otherwise.

(1996:227) asserts, "one has ceased to function as historian or scholar." The challenge is to maintain the role of critical analyst while at the same time faithfully presenting the outlooks of others. In order to avoid being captivated by "the preconstructed," Bourdieu (1992:44) feels that one often "has to be content with a small isolated subject." I chose instead to attempt to paint a holistic picture, despite the risk of enchantment by established conceptions. Moreover, the deep admiration that I developed for my informants, and my concomitant eagerness to be accepted into their circles, may run counter to Lincoln's (1996:226) dry admonition that "reverence is a religious, and not a scholarly virtue."

The larger question of method here is how to bring to the discourses one examines a skeptical, historicizing attentiveness to matters of power and interests. In Sweden as elsewhere, everyone from corporate lobbyists to anti-fascist militants claims to be pursuing public-spirited ends (see Bourdieu 1977:38-40). Yet as Herzfeld (1992:12) emphasizes, "the rhetoric of 'the common good' does not always serve the common good"; it may be a self-serving stratagem. Such wariness has sometimes been hard for me to keep in mind, but I have sought to do so by bringing in

countervailing viewpoints. For example, like many of my hosts, I interpret Sweden's stringent traffic-control policies as something positive, indeed as a magnificent collective achievement that has saved thousands of lives. Other Swedes see the same policies as an expression of bureaucrats' lust for power and an attempt to inculcate submissiveness in the populace, and I have included those dissenting voices in Chapter 3. Often, however, the left seems to get all the best lines.

With its sometimes partisan and romantic formulations, my writing stands at the opposite end of the methodological spectrum from the positivism prevalent in Swedish social science (Daun 1996:100). Like some recent feminist ethnographies, this one may be "a utopian tale of . . . social redemption," an account that raises high-stakes moral questions and "promotes universal human solidarity" (Denzin 1997:xiv-xv). My hope is that readers of these words will feel invited, or provoked, to share their own viewpoints and interpretations. This thesis would then be a lilliputian contribution to the unending dialogue about what sorts of inclusive solidarity are possible or desirable.

"The only thing that you can be certain about as an author is that you are going to lose in relation to your

material." These were the words of the acclaimed Swedish writer Sara Lidman (1999), as she reflected on her work of the past fifty years. The sentiment well describes my own experience: the originality and courage of the people I met finds only pale reflection in these pages. Moreover, there were many leads that I was unable to trace after my return to the United States. It was discovered, for example, that a respected bank official in the town of Boden had systematically shifted funds from the accounts of the wealthy to those of the poor, without ever taking a krona for himself (Dagens SverigeNytt 1998). Who was this latter-day Robin Hood, and what was he thinking? His ghost now languishes in my file folder labeled "Next visit to Sweden--Interviews."

(Dis)orientation

In telegraphic summary, this work is a portrait of the social imagination of left-leaning Swedes, focusing particularly on their efforts (1) to resist neoliberalism by drawing upon cultural idioms of equality and opposition to domination, and (2) to articulate and practice an ethic of solidarity. Chapter 2 sets the stage by exploring foreign images of Sweden as a global avant garde, a laboratory of

social imagination. In Chapter 3, I examine canons demanding socially minded and non-aggressive behavior in daily life. Such collective expectations are the sine qua non of a solidaristic society, the means through which particular forms of moral conscientiousness are constructed. Chapter 4 deals with efforts to defend the general-welfare society against the neoliberal incursions of the past decade. In particular, I analyze inventive public dramatizations through which dissenters depict a land of gentleness beleaguered by profiteers. The "solidarity" that they champion as an alternative to accelerated capitalism is the subject of Chapter 5, where I trace the contours of that watchword as well as its practical application.

Why does Sweden's fate matter outside that country's borders? It matters above all because Sweden is the most visible and successful example of the democratic taming of capitalism. The trajectory of Swedish society has shaped the horizon of possibility for other nations since the 1930s, when Franklin Roosevelt praised Swedish social arrangements (see Chapter 2). The nation's role as the lodestar of the international left became even more significant after the collapse of the undemocratic but professedly socialist regimes of Eastern Europe. "For the first time since the

Reformation," Perry Anderson (2000:17) asserts, "there are no longer any significant oppositions -- that is, systematic rival outlooks -- within the thought-world of the West."¹⁰

The Sweden of the 1990s may have been too small a blip on the ideological radar screen to have attracted Anderson's notice.

Opponents of neoliberalism are often accused, Bourdieu (1998:104) observes, of "simply defending a vanishing order and the corresponding 'privileges.'" Yet in reality their defensive efforts inevitably involve the creation of something new, as they "work to invent and construct a social order which is not governed solely by the pursuit of selfish interest and individual profit" (Bourdieu 1998:104). Such social creativity is evident on the Swedish left, where a decade of resistance to welfare-state retrenchment has generated unprecedented social legislation (see, for example, the discussions of prostitution and paternity leave in Chapters 3 and 5, respectively).

If Sweden matters for the vigor of its many defenders of general welfare, it also matters for its economic successes.

¹⁰ Anderson (2000:17) adds that there are hardly any significant ideological oppositions to neoliberalism "on a world scale either, if we discount religious doctrines as largely inoperative archaisms, as the experiences of Poland or Iran indicate we may."

Globalization guru Thomas Friedman (2000:350) counts Sweden as one of the "countries that have been the most open to globalization" -- an honor shared with Taiwan, Singapore, Israel, and Chile. In the last three or four years, national product has mushroomed, stocks have soared, and Sweden has become "the Silicon Valley of the North" (Brown-Humes 1999:4) with Stockholm a "Scandinavian Seattle" (Mcguire and Brownell 2000:52). The new wealth is less unevenly distributed than in the U.S., thanks in part to unrivalled public investments in upgrading people's skills and knowledge (UNDP 1999:91).¹¹ Not all famously left-leaning societies have survived recent years in such high style.

Sweden's current good tidings suggest an affirmative answer to Lincoln's transplanted question, cited at the beginning of this chapter -- "whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure." Yet the mercantile Sweden that seems now to flourish is neither Lotta's hoped-for refugee haven nor Olof Palme's society of equals. Their Sweden is being swept away by neoliberal

¹¹ Bo Rothstein analyzes Sweden's policies promoting full employment, which, he points out, are unparalleled in the OECD (Rothstein 1996:180). For a rigorous econometric investigation of factors contributing to egalitarian income distribution in Sweden, see Bjorklund and Freeman 1994.

tides. For Sweden is not only a space on the map but a mythical country, the farthest horizon of the social-democratic imagination. Borrowing the language of Ulrich Beck (2000:27, following Alleyne-Dettmers 1997), one may say that Sweden is a "transnational idea and the staging of that idea." Beck had in mind an Africa re-imagined in diasporic cultural expressions around the world. (Arjun Appadurai [1996:172] offered the related notion of a "transnation," a delocalized community that "retains a special ideological link to a putative place of origin but is otherwise a thoroughly diasporic collectivity.") By contrast, the "slightly imaginary Sweden" that I explore in Chapter 2 emerges not from the massive Swedish diaspora of the 1800s but rather from the interaction of hopeful society-builders within Sweden and their utopia-seeking comrades abroad. It is to that "transnational idea" of a solidaristic Sweden that I now turn.

Chapter 2. Slightly Imaginary Sweden: Rumors of Utopia

As a rumor travels it is altered in a fashion that brings it more closely into line with the hopes, fears, and worldview of those who hear it and retell it.

- James Scott (1990:145)

"Some countries are more famous than others," and Sweden, Susan Sontag (1969:23) once wrote, is "a rather famous one." As such, it is subject to "the laws of celebrity," including "cruel swings of admiration, envy and excoriation" (Sontag 1969:23). In Sweden's case, the pendulum moves between rumors of utopia and dystopia. What is at stake in many foreign accounts of Sweden is, above all, an evaluation of solidarity: do Sweden's practices of communal concern make it a model society, or do the collective constraints that solidarity requires (see Chapter 3) make Sweden a grimly repressive land in which to live? This chapter briefly surveys such contrasting stories

of Sweden, before looking in more detail at two classic depictions from the 1960s.

Many Americans, Arne Ruth (1986:277) observes, have used "the Swedish model as a vehicle to demonstrate aberrations of the American Dream." The parable of a humane and progressive Sweden has been circulating in the United States since the Great Depression, when Marquis Childs first published his reverential account of Swedes who "continue on the course of conscience, of patience, of painstaking compromise that looks to human satisfaction" (Childs 1961:191). Entitled Sweden: The Middle Way and first published in 1936 by Yale University Press, Childs' meticulous account of Swedish social institutions became an unexpected best-seller and went through several editions. Franklin Roosevelt (1936) praised the book during a press conference in June of 1936. "In Sweden," the president noted, "you have a royal family and a Socialist Government and a capitalistic system, all working happily side by side." He considered the Swedish arrangement to be "tremendously interesting" and "worthy of study" by Americans, but he instructed the reporters in attendance to use his comment on Sweden "as background without attributing it to me."

In our own day, the parable of the good Sweden persists in popular media. "With the pre-Christmas advertising blitz in full swing," a Christian Science Monitor correspondent writes, "you think there is no escape from Pokémon, LEGO, Teletubby, and Barbie ads? Think again. Think Sweden." He goes on to describe the prohibition of advertising directed at children in Sweden (Ford 1999:1). An even sharper contrast is painted by another commentator: "In Sweden a taxi driver will give you back a tip; in New York you may get physically assaulted for not giving the driver a sufficiently large tip" (Phillips 1992:73). The image of Swedes' gentle earnestness is similarly peddled by an Associated Press reporter, who observes that "self-interest often seems as oddly absent in Sweden as air pollution and subway thugs. It's a country where apartment dwellers planning parties put up notices telling neighbors to let them know if the festivities get too noisy" (Heintz 1998).

The trope of a utopian Sweden has also been traded in scholarly circles. Sociologist David Popenoe (1988:230) suggests that Sweden may be "the Western world's most caring society." The eminent economist Robert Heilbroner (1991:96) once initiated a symposium, published on the pages of the leftist academic journal Dissent, exploring how far beyond a

"real but slightly imaginary Sweden" one would need to go before reaching authentic socialism. Four characteristics of Sweden, he felt, would have to change: the dominance of a few large corporations, the capitalist commodification of labor, the wastefulness of much private consumption, and the "bourgeois" and "comfort-minded" sensibilities of Swedish culture. One participant in the symposium, Bogdan Denitch (1991:104), reflected on "what is unique about Sweden and makes it possible to think of it as a site for a project beyond the welfare state." The key, he felt, was "the massiveness of its labor movement." Eighty-five percent of Swedish workers, he observed, were organized in trade unions, and no other nation begins to approach that percentage. Without such popular organization, there would be no hope of pursuing collective goals that diverge from the interests of capital-owning elites.

Other scholars have similarly used Sweden both for international comparisons and for utopian imaginings.¹² In some cases, invocations of a flourishing Sweden have had

¹² See, for example, the "Sweden with Care" scenario for the year 2006, proposed by Heclo and Madsen (1987:191-195); and the portrait of a solidaristic Sweden of the future, in Huldt et al. (1980:170-175).

immediate relevance for policy choices, as when Eastern Europeans debated their not-yet-sealed societal fates just after Communism crumbled. In a 1991 survey by American pollsters, 27 percent of Russians hoped for "a modified form of capitalism as found in Sweden" (Parenti 1997:73-74).¹³ Many other Eastern Europeans shared this wish. An observer of struggles over the fate of Polish welfare institutions noted that in Poland's public debate, Sweden was "taken as the ideal model of the welfare state" (Kowalik 1993:88). He found that "undermining the credibility of the Swedish model constitutes part of a strategic propaganda campaign" by Polish elites intent on dismantling the welfare system. One intervention in that right-wing campaign was the charge that Sweden's affluence depended upon the "increased demand for khaki-colored equipment in a divided world," a reference to Swedish arms manufacturers (Kowalik 1993:88).¹⁴

¹³ Of the remainder, "54 percent chose some form of socialism and only 20 percent wanted a free-market economy such as in the United States or Germany" (Parenti 1997:74).

¹⁴ In fact, the weapons industry is responsible for somewhat less than one percent of Sweden's exports (Burke 1995a:12), but this Polish commentator joins many other foreign and Swedish observers in suggesting that arms sales belie Sweden's international peace-making efforts (see Herzfeld 1997:207).

Some of Sweden's recent salience for foreign polemicists derives from the nation's successes in the 1990s, but much of it may be the residue of an earlier renown. Beginning in the late 1950s, historian Peter Hall (1998:843) writes, Stockholm "became known worldwide as the quintessence of a social philosophy, realized on the ground." It was above all in the 1960s and early 1970s that many left-leaning Europeans and Americans perceived Sweden as "a largely realized political Utopia" (Ruth 1988:11). In that period of political hope, some saw Sweden as an avant-garde, a forerunner of the future, the "prototype of modern society" (Tomasson 1970).

This view informs an American high-school textbook published by Prentice-Hall in 1977. Entitled Sweden: Focus on Post-Industrialism, the book paints Sweden through the words of several of its inhabitants, including a black American deserter from the U.S. Army in Vietnam. It may be one of the most subtly subversive books ever to bear the standard American public-school ownership certificate inside its front cover. The author, Karen Hopkins (1977:101), intersperses the text with questions demanding a comparison with the United States, such as "Should government assume the responsibility of providing for the old or handicapped, or should this be a family affair?" She ends the book by

anticipating "the society that comes after post-industrial society," a future that she hopes will be characterized by "community activities" and de-emphasized consumerism. The vision sounds much like the Sweden that she has just portrayed (Hopkins 1977:118).

To see the future, foreigners came to Sweden. A steady stream visited civic and popular institutions "to study the frontiers of social modernity" (Ruth 1986:254). Included were journalists, academics, trade unionists and government officials, as well as students and wandering idealists. Stockholm became "an object of pilgrimage from informed visitors from all over the world" (Hall 1998:843). Encountering such guests, the young writer Lars Gustafsson (1964:15) noted that "they all seem to have in common that they want to use Sweden in order to prove something."

Sometimes these visitors wanted to demonstrate the existence of a dark night-side of Sweden, in contrast to the utopian reputation. Certain conservative critics painted "a negative Utopia, an Orwellian nightmare of surveillance and restraint, of alienation and ice-cold self-discipline" (Ruth 1988:13; see also Svensson 1988:153-157). Among the more intemperate of these was the South African journalist Roland Huntford (1971:348), who portrayed Swedes as "the new

totalitarians," a technocratically manipulated people "who love their servitude." He framed his polemic as a warning to the West about a Sweden that had fulfilled the prophecies of Aldous Huxley's (1932) Brave New World.

Other foreign commentators emphasized not soft-gloved tyranny but social dreariness; they sought to prove "that welfare leads to boredom and hysteria, which in turn leads to sexual promiscuity, alcoholism, a high frequency of suicide and juvenile delinquency" (Gustafsson 1964:15). These critics found it paradoxical that so affluent and well-organized a society as Sweden did not engender general good cheer (Gustafsson 1964:18; Hendin 1964:70). An early instance of this attitude was Kathleen Nott's (1961) portrait of Sweden, A Clean, Well-lighted Place.

A sharper version of the unhappiness thesis came in Dwight Eisenhower's (1961:605) remarks, at a July, 1960, Republican Party convention breakfast in Chicago, about an unnamed (but to the press, unmistakable) European land of "almost complete paternalism." Due to its "socialistic philosophy," the president declared, that country's suicide rate had "gone up almost unbelievably," and "drunkenness" and "lack of ambition" were pervasive.

The president's words helped foster the fallacious notion that Sweden's suicide rates were the world's highest. Herbert Hendin's (1964:4) study, Suicide and Scandinavia, noted that the Swedish rate was "equalled by those in Japan, Switzerland, Germany and Austria," as well as Denmark¹⁵; Hopkins (1977:95) later wrote that World Health Organization data indicated that ten nations -- and California -- had higher suicide rates than Sweden. Today, the nation falls somewhere in the middle of the bell curve of European suicide rates (UNDP 1999:225).

Other conservatives linked suicide and alcoholism to sexual liberalism, which was deployed as a symbol for the Swedish welfare state (Lennerhed 1994:96). Sweden was indeed an innovative and (in later light) trailblazing nation with regard to sex education in schools and the easing of film censorship (see Chapter 3). This sometimes engendered opposition, as when a Swedish erotic film ("The Language of Love," 1969) provoked 30,000 Londoners to demonstrate in

¹⁵ Hendin (1964:5) also observed that suicide is "but one barometer of social tension," and that while Sweden's suicide rate was double the U.S. rate, "the homicide rate in the United States is ten times that of the Scandinavian countries."

Trafalgar Square against Swedish "porn, suicide, alcoholism, and gonorrhea" (Cowie 1985:80).

In later years, Sweden remained a *bête noire* for conservatives. "The cold war may wax and wane," Christopher Hitchens (1989:116) wrote, "but through it all the American right maintains a permanent, visceral hostility to one small, durable country: Sweden." In the 1980s, Arne Ruth (1986:281) believed, the "baiting of Sweden" was an act of "exorcism" of late-1960s hopefulness about "technological and administrative modernity." It was a way for other Europeans and North Americans to project anxieties about their own societal developments onto Sweden -- a rhetorical cousin, perhaps, to the Western European practice of ascribing the afflictions of modernity to Americanization. One of the harsher exorcisms appeared in Germany's reputable weekly Der Spiegel, which in 1983 told of Sweden's foster-care policies under the headline, "Children's Gulag in the Swedish Social State" (Svensson 1988:157). Another allusion to the ambiguous achievements of modern Sweden surfaced in U.S. media in 1997, when it was reported that "dead people are now heating thousands of homes in Sweden, their posthumous candlepower piped to local energy companies from the ovens of two high-tech crematoriums" (Maeder 1997:12). In its

narrative and its use of quotations, that U.S. News & World Report account poked fun at Swedish collectivism. "It's only sensible!" a crematory bureaucrat was quoted as saying, "and relatives can console themselves that the death of a loved one benefits the whole community" (Maeder 1997:12).

One might have expected criticism of Sweden to subside in the 1990s, as a right-leaning government, followed by increasingly market-oriented Social Democratic regimes, made the country less socio-politically distinctive. On the other hand, the fall of Eastern European Communism boosted Sweden's rhetorical salience as a surviving alternative to neoliberalism.

The most striking recent discussions of a dystopian Sweden occurred in relation to the country's sterilization policies. Thousands of people in Sweden were sterilized -- often involuntarily -- between 1934 and 1976. This was done on eugenicist grounds and also, in later years, out of concerns about welfare-state finance (see Broberg and Tydén 1996). Similar programs were carried out in other countries, including Norway, Denmark, and the United States. What is particularly disturbing (and puzzling) is that the Swedish program went on for as long as it did. Certain other sterilization campaigns in Europe and the United States were

discredited and stopped at earlier points, while some continued even longer than Sweden's.¹⁶

This history has been studied, reported and debated within Sweden for three decades (Wennerberg 1997:148, 150-151). But as Tor Wennerberg (1997:146) has demonstrated, the sterilizations became an international media cause célèbre only after a Swedish journalist succeeded in framing them as "a logical outgrowth of the construction of the welfare state." With that novel spin, what had been old news suddenly fit corporate news organizations' neoliberal contention "that the public sector is inherently bad or oppressive and should be rolled back even further" (Wennerberg 1997:152). Foreign journalists deployed the story to fight their own national battles, as when the Guardian's reporter linked the Swedish sterilizations to what he saw as the British left's "contempt for ordinary people" (Wennerberg 1997:147).

I have focused on images of Sweden's internal, domestic institutions, but foreign policy has also powerfully contributed to the country's reputation. I remember hearing

¹⁶ It is worth noting that Olof Palme was an outspoken opponent of the sterilization program, as was the predecessor of today's Left Party.

Nelson Mandela (in the speech mentioned in Chapter 1) describe how Sweden in 1959 was the first nation to consider flight from apartheid to be a sufficient ground for political asylum, thereby granting refuge to black South Africans. Mandela deemed that precedent to have had enormous importance. The same year, Sweden stood alone among Western nations in supporting Algerian independence from France in a United Nations vote (Arter 1999:283). It was later the first Western state to recognize North Vietnam (Hermele 1993:64).¹⁷

Less than a decade later, Olof Palme became the most prominent Western European political leader to protest the American war in Vietnam. On a February evening in 1968, Palme, then Minister of Education, marched beside North Vietnam's ambassador to Moscow in a demonstration against the war.¹⁸ The photographic image of Palme and the diminutive

¹⁷ Sweden also gave "political and diplomatic recognition . . . [to] liberation movements, which were allowed to open 'information offices' with semi-diplomatic status in Sweden" (Hermele 1993:64).

¹⁸ In going to the event, Palme had not known that he would encounter the ambassador there. Conservative politicians later said that upon seeing the ambassador, Palme should have faked pain in his leg and left the march. To this Palme replied: "But I did not have pain in my leg, neither that day nor the day that I demonstrated . . . against the Soviet troops' invasion of Czechoslovakia" (Haste et al. 1986:42).

Vietnamese man together at the front of the peace procession, each bearing a torch, appeared in 367 American newspapers (Haste et al. 1986:42). A couple of weeks later, the United States recalled its ambassador from Stockholm; it was to be more than a year before he returned. Palme continued his anti-war eloquence, most memorably in his speech about Nixon's Christmas bombing of Hanoi: "History provides many examples of such atrocities, often connected with place-names -- Guernica, Oradour, Babi Yar, Katyn, Lidice, Sharpesville, Treblinka. . . . Now there is another name to add to the list: Hanoi, Christmas 1972" (Burke 1995b:2; Haste et al. 1986:57; see Stenelo 1984).¹⁹

Palme was one of several paragons of Swedish internationalism -- I think also of diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, for example, or U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld. For his efforts to protect the Jewish citizens of Budapest, the former became a symbol of stout-hearted resistance to the Nazis. The latter's grave in an Uppsala cemetery was a place of pilgrimage for me.

¹⁹ After this speech, Palme received 1,200 letters from grateful Americans, and an unspecified number from offended Americans (Haste et al. 1986:53).

In the next section of this chapter, I continue to explore foreign images of Sweden. Readers looking for sociological particulars that illuminate how this fabled society is actually organized will find them in Chapter 3's discussions of sexual politics and of traffic regulation, and in Chapter 5's appraisal of the promotion of children's well-being in Sweden.

Two pilgrims to utopia

"The experience of any new country," Sontag (1969:23) observed, "unfolds as a battle of clichés." In the previous section, I described the deployment in recent decades of certain clichéd images of Sweden. For the likely U.S. readers of these words, as for me, the utopian images may be especially enchanting. They paint a Sweden that has largely solved the great American dilemmas of inequality and violence. Could such a land exist? A society where, as mentioned above, apartment dwellers inform neighbors in advance about potentially noisy parties? A society where "it was claimed by social scientists and physicians that for the first time in history you could not tell the social class of a child by examining its health record and rate of growth"

(Hitchens 1989:116)?²⁰ It is hard to avoid romanticizing such a Sweden, especially during its time of late-1960s leftist effervescence. Was it not a nation of secular saints, exempt from the ordinary predicaments of greed and aggression?

William James (1985:46) once noted that "the sanest and best of us are of one clay with lunatics and prison inmates." To remind readers (and especially myself) that this holds true for Swedes as well as Americans -- that none are exempt from the messy maneuverings of human life -- I turn now to a critical assessment of two popular foreign accounts of Sweden at the height of its avant-garde reputation in the late 1960s. As I explain below, I bring to these reports an interpretive method developed in a very different society, one in which many people prize bold displays of self-assertion.

One of the two works is On Being Swedish, by Paul Britten Austin (1968), a British native who before writing

²⁰ I checked Hitchens' dramatic claim with Dr. Olle Lundberg, a leading scholar of the interactions between health and social class. One study had indeed claimed that class differences in height are nonexistent in Sweden, Lundberg noted, but more recent work contradicted that conclusion. Class differences in height and in child mortality do exist, although the former are not significant in cohorts born after the mid-1950s (Lundberg, personal communication, December 13, 1996).

the book had lived for several years in Sweden and had translated Swedish literature into English. The other is Susan Sontag's (1969) richly detailed essay, "A Letter from Sweden," written after Sontag had lived in the country for seven months. Both works have been important to students of Swedish culture, and they continue to be cited in such studies as Åke Daun's (1996) Swedish Mentality. The two essays lend themselves to comparison because they have much in common: they were written during the same period by non-Swedes; each author is a literary professional with some sensitivity to semiotic nuance; and both essays seek to portray not institutional structures but sensibilities, temperaments, styles of interaction, and national character.

To explore these ethnographic accounts, I draw upon the concept of "social poetics," as I mentioned in Chapter 1. In The Poetics of Manhood, Herzfeld (1985) looks at an agonistic rural Cretan community, the pseudonymous village of Glendi. Through complex communicative devices involving such activities as boasting, bluff and animal theft, the male Glendiots "engage in a constant struggle to gain a precarious and transitory advantage over each other" (Herzfeld 1985:11). A "poetic" approach makes visible such semiotic particulars as the ways in which card players in the course of their

games draw analogies to local conventions of sexual accessibility (Herzfeld 1985:161). Attentiveness to the shifting play of verbal as well as nonverbal forms helps readers to comprehend the performances of these savvy and self-conscious Cretan social actors.

To what extent would a theory of social poetics be useful in studying a society in which self-assertive behavior is less pervasive or, conceivably, more carefully cloaked? What might it uncover about a society whose people seldom view their social interactions as actors' performances -- with all the self-conscious craft and artifice that the theatrical metaphor implies? If Paul Britten Austin and Susan Sontag are to be believed, many Swedes in the 1960s were characterized by -- as Sontag wrote of one of her companions -- "a quite touching guilelessness" (Sontag 1969:30). Would a concept of social poetics reveal the attributes of such guilelessness as well as the possible presence of agonistic relations? Herzfeld (1985:49) suggests that the answer may be yes: "the Glendiots, because of their determined nonconformism, can teach us where to look for poetic elements in the performances of identity that we meet in other, less obtrusively insubordinate communities."

Before proceeding, I should offer a further explanation of social poetics. The concept involves above all an attentiveness to what Herzfeld (1987:78) calls "the constitutive power of form and creative deformation in all human action." Central to this constitutive power is Roman Jakobson's (1960:356) notion of poetic function, which he defines somewhat opaquely as "the set (Einstellung) toward the MESSAGE as such, focus on the message for its own sake." The poetic function involves drawing attention to the form of the message and away from its referential content. It thus enriches the content by converting it from a precise referential mode to a more multivalent connotative mode (Herzfeld 1997a:147).

In less technical language, it is enough to keep in mind that a social-poetic approach explores how "people deploy the debris of the past for all kinds of present purposes" (Herzfeld 1997a:24). In addition to Herzfeld and Jakobson, the theorists who have contributed to this sensibility include Giambattista Vico (1984), J. L. Austin (1971, 1975), Victor Turner (1974), and Pierre Bourdieu (1977). Drawing on their shared concerns, one could describe social poetics as a practice-oriented analytical sensibility that is open to all communicative means, without privileging any; that recognizes

the constantly shifting grounds of meaning, the eternal mutability of forms and messages; that highlights the ambiguities of self-consciousness and intention, and the possibilities for unintended consequences; and that asks not only how messages are imparted but also how they are received. Such an approach tends to deconstruct any allegedly literal (or "textbook") readings of human actions. It frequently serves to highlight the most successful and most intricately crafted meaning-laden actions, the occasional great performance within a particular cultural space and time (see Turner 1974). In scrutinizing the ways in which people manipulate and make use of social conventions, a poetic approach also calls attention to the frequent bending and continual refashioning of such conventions.

Craft and strategy among Swedes

Both Austin and Sontag portray a number of common Swedish qualities -- self-restraint, willingness to listen, slowness to anger, guilelessness -- that are generally held in high regard in academic communities such as my own (excepting the last quality, the possession of which could

cause one to be considered something of a curiosity). Conversely, the rough-and-tumble of male rivalry in a Cretan village could well be seen as negative, especially by someone of my professedly egalitarian values. In this attitude, I would be in good company: native Swedes' harshest judgment of immigrants, according to one field study, is that they quarrel a lot (Daun 1996:156). Might contrastive observations of this sort fuel a "rhetoric of national reasonableness -- we have it, they don't" (Herzfeld 1992:130)? Such a rhetoric could be used to justify various forms of domination -- if not precisely the conquest of Crete by Sweden, a move that many winter-chilled Swedes might appreciate.

One partial antidote to invidious stereotyping is attention to exceptions to the (allegedly) prevailing patterns. In the Swedish case, this means examining cases of agonistic behavior, whether involving guile or aggression. Happily for the purposes of the present study, there are some relevant cases.

Austin (1968:35) offers one almost paradigmatic example of outwardly modest, self-effacing behavior as a means (conscious or not) to self-advancement. He quotes a news

story in Dagens Nyheter that describes a man who had written a controversial article about dogs:

After some minutes of excited discussion, the Secretary General asked to be allowed to speak. He declared that he alone had been responsible for the article in the magazine [of the Swedish Kennel Club] and that, if required, he would willingly vacate his office. . . . The clever tactician got his answer at once. The head of the Army's dog school, Major ----, got up and in the very midst of the proceedings presented the Secretary General with the school's gold medal, which he affixed to his breast, adding a few words as to the latter's unshakable reputation as a figure placed over the portals both of Swedish and international canine culture. Whereon the Board expressed its unreserved confidence in the Secretary General and his way of carrying out his duties.

In Austin's exegesis of this scene, a shared desire to avoid "a head-on collision" leads to a settlement: "At the last moment a showdown is avoided, and the world of affairs, in

which everyone knows his self-interest has a stake, goes its calm way" By writing in the passive voice, he implies that there was a collective, consensual effort to prevent further tension: "Faces, in a society where 'face' so matters, are carefully saved" (Austin 1969:35). Sontag (1969:26) similarly observes that "perhaps the most notable taboo" in Sweden "is raised against the signs of aggressiveness." (Here it is worth noting that even in Crete, containing one's own aggression may be positively valued -- the ultimate display of strength and superiority [Herzfeld 1985:76].)

Attention to social poeticity enables us to add an analysis of complex interpersonal symbolic maneuvering to Austin's brief exegesis. For example, we can see in the Secretary-General's actions the methods of a skilled social poet (or "clever tactician," as the reporter has it): he waits for the others to have a chance to speak, humbly requests permission to speak, and unhesitatingly assumes full responsibility. These actions conform to the poetic canons of Swedish society -- particularly the taboo on aggressive self-promotion. The Secretary-General then announces a penitential readiness to renounce his power, but by qualifying the announcement, he avoids making it into a

backhanded boast: "if required," he is ready to resign, signaling that power (i.e. the power to cause him to resign) is in the board's hands, not his own.

To the Secretary-General's performance, the Major is able to add his own display of canonical Swedish qualities, demonstrating by his prompt action that he is ready mercifully and generously to help up a person who is down, in this case by relieving the Secretary-General's shame by means of a proclamation of that man's virtues. We can see the Jakobsonian poetic function at work in the Major's unexpected act of awarding the gold medal in the midst of these tense proceedings: the bold timing of the act -- its shameless intrusion on the agenda -- deflects attention from the referential content of the Major's message. Is the Secretary-General's reputation truly "unshakable," as the Major claims? Is the Secretary-General in fact a competent and honest man? Participants have been diverted from their previous contemplation of these serious questions. Now they merely contemplate the Major's performance; "the implicit claims are accepted because their very outrageousness carries a revelatory kind of conviction," to borrow Herzfeld's terms (1985:10-11).

We may wonder how much of this impressive drama was unself-conscious, and how much was crafty and calculating. While we cannot know all of the Major's thoughts, his actions provide a clue as to possible premeditation: Did he just happen to be carrying with him an extra gold medal?

This multifaceted drama largely escapes Austin's pre-poetic gaze, as noted above. He similarly passes over another case of symbolic maneuvering. Describing the public debate over gendered social roles in Sweden, Austin (1968:142) reports that women heatedly discuss the matter while "the men preserve a dignified silence." Here a student of Deborah Tannen's (1989:106) work might ask: "to serve what immediate interactional goal" (not to mention long-term goals) did Swedish men preserve such a silence? Was it a strategic silence that helped to maintain household and workplace privileges by discouraging critical discussion?

Austin (1968:152) is more perceptive of social poeticity when he discusses Ingmar Bergman, who "used to walk about the streets of Stockholm in ragged carpet slippers" and an "old brown beret." Austin understands that this was a complex poetic assertion of bohemian identity, one which by calling attention to forms of dress deflected people's gaze from Bergman's class situation as the privileged "son of a court

chaplain." (One might note the similarity to British inverted snobbery.) Austin goes on to observe that in the years since Bergman's youth, "his art has trumped all the cards of the bourgeoisie and he has scrapped the carpet slippers" (Austin 1968:151-52). The example of Bergman brings to mind Victor Turner's (1974:28) discussion of those "exceptionally liminal thinkers" who are (in Shelley's phrase [Andrews 1993:699]) "the unacknowledged legislators of mankind," thanks to their ability to rework multivalent cultural symbols and metaphors. Such reworking -- by ordinary "poets of the self" (Herzfeld 1985:274) -- is the subject to which I now turn.

Playing with(in) the rules: the mutability of convention

Austin and Sontag agree that Sweden is a society of exceptionally robust and exacting social expectations and prohibitions.²¹ Sontag (1969:26) describes "a whole system of

²¹ Whether one society's behavioral codes, taken as a whole, may be more demanding than another's -- as these authors imply -- is open to question. The matter becomes politically hazardous for those who accept Freud's equation of civilization with the progress of repression and the "coercion and renunciation of instinct" (Freud 1961:8).

anxieties" in a "taboo-ridden country" where "the level of guilt about infractions of the social code, such as being drunk in public, is much higher than in England." Austin (1968:176) quotes a journalist who complains of "prejudices of etiquette and convention" and "inhibitions [that] no longer have any reasonable function."

Austin (1968:5) also cites a Swedish fictional character from a nineteenth-century play who asserts that "in a country like Sweden forms must be respected. Here all paragraphs must be observed to the letter." To this another character replies with a paradoxical claim: "It's precisely where there's so much fuss about forms that it's easiest to circumvent them and live as one will." Austin offers no exegesis here, but one could read this as a claim that "fuss about forms" makes social codes more visible or palpable and thus more susceptible to acts of creative re-interpretation, evasion or transformation.

Most Swedes occasionally seek to step outside of certain stringent social canons, and both Sontag and Austin mention sojourns in nature and foreign travel as a means by which to do this. "Because of the high value placed on restraint," Sontag (1969:27) observes, "there is a great fear of letting go -- and, of course, a vast craving to do just that."

Central to this process of letting go is alcohol, according to Sontag: "To take even one drink is a quite literal signal to the others present, announcing that one is about to become a different person: warmer, perhaps indiscreet, a little aggressive." In depicting the first drink as an act of signaling something about one's intended relationship to the canons of self-restraint, Sontag shows that she is a skilled semiotician of social interaction.²²

"All Swedes who travel," Sontag (1969:24) claims, "assert that they feel freer, behave more expressively abroad. . . . 'If only you knew me as I am when I'm in Spain.'" Austin adds that they sometimes seek to retain such a sense of freedom by selecting a non-Swedish spouse. Yet not all discomfort with social codes prompts physical relocation or a change of comrades; there are also people who re-fashion the symbolic materials at their disposal.

Austin (1968:49) stumbles across one such case of the dialectic between convention and invention without

²² A truly poetic approach, however, would eschew the assertion Sontag makes that such signals are "quite literal," as if the notion of literality were not itself ineluctably figurative (Herzfeld 1997:140).

recognizing it as such. He quotes a column in Dagens Nyheter concerning seating at a restaurant:

He who is not a regular guest, or not recognized, is customarily treated with suspicion, a suspicion that rises in proportion to the entrant's evident ignorance of the rules of the game. Amid all those empty tables, we happened to sit down at one reserved for Herr Torbjörn Axelman. 7.30 was on the card; and now it was 8.45. Impossible to describe the wrath of the waiter who tried to drive us away from this spot! Amazement, disgust that anyone should do something so unheard-of as to sit down at Herr Torbjörn Axelman's table, yes, and even insist on sitting there until he arrived, stood painted on his face.

Austin interprets this as an example of the unalterability of Swedish stiffness and rigidity: "Swedes are the first to lament their exaggerated passion for order. . . . Yet [they] seem unable to do anything about it."

By means of a social poetics approach to the same event, one reaches a diametrically opposite reading: the Swedish

narrator of the passage is by no means "unable to do anything about" the excessive formality. The narrator, named Grand -- we do not learn the columnist's gender -- is a savvy and capable social poet. First, Grand understands that social prohibitions are at stake; we see this in Grand's mention of "the rules of the game," above. Second, Grand audaciously, poetically violates those rules, refusing to move to one of the numerous empty tables even when confronted by an angry waiter. Third, Grand boasts about the episode in the nation's most respected newspaper, insolently (by Swedish standards) noting in conclusion that "Herr Axelman didn't turn up the whole evening." All in all, it was a grand day for what Pierre Bourdieu (1977:78) calls "the generative principle of regulated improvisations" or, more simply, the creative transgression of social norms as an activity with the potential continually to reshape those norms.

One task of a poetics of social interaction is "to explain how and why the conventions . . . may be violated without injuring the perpetrator's standing" (Herzfeld 1985:11). In this case, we do not know for sure whether such injury occurred: perhaps Grand acquired a reputation as a proud and self-serving crank. But not many morally quarantined cranks write regular columns for prestigious

papers, so unless we assume that this was Grand's final, fatal column, it seems likely that Grand's outlook was shared and supported by a number of (young? newly-affluent?) Swedes.

We encounter in Sontag's work a different dialectic of convention and invention, an instance of bold and creative play in all its destabilizing seriousness. Unlike Austin, Sontag (1969:28) is keenly aware of the symbolic maneuvering taking place during her days as a film-maker in Sweden:

When I was shooting the film, I sometimes came near to losing my temper when an actor or one of the crew -- all people I'd become fond of, who liked me, whom I spent every day with -- would ask me if he could borrow a cigarette, assuring me elaborately that when he bought a pack at lunchtime he would return the one he was taking now. (I saw Swedes going through the same number with each other, so the verbal ritual can't be explained as courtesy to the foreigner or deference to the boss.)

Sontag seems to recognize the performative dimensions of the Swedish display of non-exploitative sensitivity. (One might

make a comparison to American rituals of meticulousness in dividing bills at restaurants.) Explicitly intending to transform this custom of anxiously refusing generosity, Sontag responded not only with spoken arguments but with a bold performance that transgressed ordinary social patterns:

I had my verbal ritual, too: saying "Please take as many as you like, you don't have to ask," sometimes adding a sententious remark on how such freedoms among friends and colleagues go without saying in America. Ostentatiously, didactically, I would lift cigarettes from the same guy's pack the next day without asking.

One can analyze this episode at many levels, beginning with Sontag's own wider social context. As a rising cultural hero among literary left circles, she is presenting the follies of Swedish etiquette to the readers of an alternative but widely read journal, Ramparts, in 1969. Following Turner (1974:64, 123), we may ask whether any "root paradigms" are at stake here: can we find what he calls "consciously recognized (though not consciously grasped) cultural models" or "deeply

ingrained tendencies to act and speak in suprapersonal or 'representative' ways appropriate to the role taken"?

Sontag was something of a visiting prophet in Sweden, carrying with her the tidings of a late-Sixties revolution in interpersonal relations and popular culture that was -- in these months before the Woodstock festival -- arguably more advanced in the United States than in Sweden. She notes that she is "used to American, even more particularly, California manners," and her evocation of the "freedoms among friends" in the U.S.A. both affirms the social customs of the folks back home (Ramparts readers among them) and contains a hint of nostalgia for a lost communitas. (Nostalgia is often the flip side of a longing for social progress, as Christopher Lasch [1991:14] has noted.) Thus we may see Sontag's flamboyant theft of the cigarettes as (among other things) "a successful performance of personal identity," a poetic act that connects "the self with larger categories of identity" but that hides its own "grandiose implications" by drawing attention to the performance itself, to use Herzfeld's (1985:10) explicitly Jakobsonian language.

We have merely hinted here at Sontag's web of meanings. Much more could be said about her complex notions of freedom and conviviality -- not to mention the understandings held by

her Swedish colleagues, about which she provides little evidence. What, for example, were the symbolic resonances of cigarettes in late-Sixties Swedish culture, and in the artistic subcultures therein?

Sontag (1969:29) writes that in spite of her daring demonstration of alternative conventions for cigarette acquisition, the rite of cloying politeness "kept happening." On the film-making team of which Sontag was a part, the cigarette-borrowing canon turned out to be rather stable; the social fluid, as it were, was viscous. Not all creative reworking of social forms brings forth a prompt transfiguration of convention; the consequences may be imperceptible and unintended.

Why did these Swedes refuse Sontag's invitations to informality, leaving her to "feel a little insulted when they didn't become freer with me"? She perspicaciously reads the refusal as due, in part, to a fear of incurring obligations - connected to a fear of being exploited. Is it in fact dangerous to receive gifts? Indeed it is, if we remember that "giving is also a way of possessing" (Bourdieu 1977:195; see Mauss 1990). Yet why should such a minor social debt as

a few cigarettes be a source of anxiety?²³ For many Swedes, in Sontag's (1969:25) view, even the most trivial negotiations with others can be traumatic: "Talking never ceases to be a problem for the Swedes: a lean across an abyss." Moreover, she claims, "for a Swede to show how he feels, if the feeling is a vehement one, is a grave enterprise." If I accept your cigarettes, you may ask a favor of me later on, and it will be awkward and uncomfortable for me to respond to your request.

Can one know the simplicity of another's heart?

What Sontag calls "a quite touching guilelessness" is the subject of seven pages of Austin's (1968:130-36) book. He half-jokingly draws a link between what he sees as the characteristically "dispassionate" temperament of Swedes and the longstanding abstention from military alliances of Swedish foreign policy: "'We Swedes,' it has been said, 'are neutral . . . because we are neutral'; a remark not improved by exegesis" (Austin 1968:52). Austin's central claim,

²³ For an example of the social significance of shared cigarettes, see Herzfeld's (1985:171, 173) discussion of how a youth who was denied a cigarette at a social gathering retaliated by stealing one of his host's sheep.

however, is not that Swedes tend to be unemotional or indifferent; rather, their "way of meeting others" is so "extremely candid" that it often "seems naive, almost childish." He quotes an Italian journalist's assertion that in Sweden, "they bring up children so that when they grow up they can still be . . . children." Such "candour and simplicity of soul" is not only a residual product of childhood socialization; Austin finds evidence for a pervasive cultural "demand for absolute honesty towards others but above all toward oneself" (Austin 1968:132, 134, 176-77).

It is worth noting the cross-cultural "distinction clichés" (Löfgren 1993:167) at work here. Austin (1968:132) draws a contrast to "a Parisian or a sophisticate," two types who join the abovementioned Italian as worldly and perhaps wily characters in Austin's stereotypical European landscape. The imagined Mediterranean region is a frequent rhetorical counterpoint to the imagined Sweden: it is often portrayed as a "bulwark of neo-feudalism, papism, patriarchy, hierarchy, disorder, and inequality" (Trädgårdh 1999:18; see Herzfeld 1997b:205, 208; Sontag 1969:26, 34; Daun 1996:151; Löfgren 1999:155-209).

Concomitant with the alleged Swedish absence of artifice and insincerity is a tendency not to suspect or analyze the motivations of other people -- a matter on which both authors comment. Austin (1968:53-54) claims that Swedes feel "baffled and adrift" when pressed to grapple with human psychology, and he quotes a Stockholm psychoanalyst's comment that "it is absolutely astounding how little psychological awareness these people possess." In a similar vein, Sontag (1969:24) declares that

Swedes show a strong aversion to reflecting about motives and character. . . . Any extended scrutiny of someone's character, that staple of everyday middle-class conversation in the United States, gets little response here Whenever possible, situations and words are taken at face value.²⁴

²⁴ One may object to the term "face value" here: it carries the illusive implication that "situations and words" can have a single referential content that is independent of social context, readily accessible, and identical for all observers or listeners.

Sontag (1969:29-30) goes on to relate a moment both metalingual and phatic (in Roman Jakobson's [1960:357] terms²⁵), in which she initiated "a conversation . . . with someone which was precisely about the difficulty of having conversations":

This was mainly a ploy, an attempt to get this guy to relax somewhat, to extend himself a little bit. I wasn't interested in talking seriously about talking; nor did I want anything intimate, in the way of confidences or feelings, from this man. But he took me literally, and jumped with a quite touching guilelessness to the heart of the matter. He had assumed I did mean conversation in the sense of intimate confidences, because his solemn answer to my rather loose remark was: "Well, the reason I don't like to talk is because I'm afraid that if I

²⁵ In his essay on "Linguistics and Poetics," Jakobson (1960:350-377) distinguishes between four functions of language: phatic, poetic, referential, and metalingual. Put simply, the phatic builds a connection between speaker and listener; the poetic calls attention to form, to the play of language; the referential directs attention to a person or thing or idea; and the metalingual comments on language itself.

do confide in someone, he might repeat what I've said to someone else the next day."

Putting aside Sontag's invocation of literality here (a matter already discussed), we see that the reported encounter was not only metalingual (conversing about conversation) and phatic (Sontag's attempt to build a relaxed atmosphere for shared understanding), but also poetic: Sontag is self-consciously playing with language. She introduces a conversation topic that she does not wish to pursue, merely as an (abortive) means to the phatic end of highlighting her wish for informal conviviality. The man's response -- when replayed to present-day American ears -- does have a ring of simplemindedness, especially if we assume that this man was one of Sontag's culturally sophisticated colleagues in the film-making business. On the other hand, we must think about the context of the encounter: the man may have been speaking not in his native Swedish but in English (Sontag does not say), and he was addressing a celebrated cultural figure who may also have been his boss (see Sontag 1969:28). Under such intimidating circumstances, to reduce and simplify one's own verbal expression would be understandable and perhaps wise.

How are we to assess these claims of widespread Swedish guilelessness and psychological unsophistication? The hesitancy to discuss human motivations is something that both Sontag and Austin believe they observed. Naiveté, however, is harder to appraise: perhaps the Swedes they encountered merely appeared naive while unspoken shrewdness lingered beneath the surface. The complexities of others' inner lives may be largely opaque to anthropologists (see Herzfeld 1997b:25; Needham 1972).

"The 'honest' Swedish behavior," Daun (1994:115) observes, is "understood by many foreigners . . . as naive, blue-eyed, as a sort of principle-bound woodenness and incapacity to perceive the conditions of real life."²⁶ Such images of Swedish naiveté are found in northern Europe, in Mediterranean towns frequented by Swedish tourists (see Löfgren 1999:174), and in the self-stereotyping humor of Swedish diaspora communities in and around Minnesota (e.g., Keillor 1985). I remember hearing a Norwegian anthropologist

²⁶ Daun uses the Swedish word blåögd, which means blue-eyed or naive. At first inspection, it might be thought curious that a word describing a very common eye-color among Swedes should also connote an unsuspecting attitude. But "blue-eyed" has wider European roots: the English phrase, connoting "childlike innocence," dates from the early 1600s (Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary 1997:228).

describe a poorly planned government program that enabled many Norwegians to bilk their state. I asked him whether there were parallels in Sweden. "A Swede," he quipped, "wouldn't even see that there was an opportunity there to take advantage of."

Blue-eyed Swedes

After I had quoted Sontag's comments about Swedish "guilelessness" in an academic presentation in Uppsala, a student came up to me in the corridor and shyly asked, "Are we guileless? And is it bad to be guileless?" Her second question sounds ingenuous, but it hints at the important matter of whether a hopeful view of human beings may be an ingredient of a democratic and egalitarian politics.

I discussed this issue with Johan von Schreeb, the founder of the Swedish chapter of Doctors Without Borders. At the time I interviewed him, Swedish newspapers were reporting on Estonians and Russians taking all-expenses-paid vacations in Sweden's comfortable refugee centers and prisons. They would do so, the papers proclaimed, by making insincere asylum requests or by committing crimes; an

Estonian newspaper allegedly printed a guide to how to pull off such stunts. Von Schreeb told me:

Many [foreigners] play on the idea that many are naive in Sweden. There is some sort of, some naiveté that I like tremendously much . . . when the naiveté is based on the idea that we believe that people are good and that people don't want to take advantage of the system, but that people want to do their share, and if they can't do their share then one should help them. I feel that this is brilliant and fantastically beautiful as a fundamental principle; but that it then is misused so that it even, like, is circulated that in Sweden one can create a disturbance in order to land in jail as a vacation -- then I wonder what I have done wrong.

Von Schreeb thus acknowledges that non-Swedes "play on" the idea of Swedish naiveté. He takes this negatively-charged concept and marks off a narrower, more positive field: "when

the naiveté is based on the idea . . . that people are good." This, he feels, is a worthy social ethic.²⁷

Similar praise of naiveté was expressed by Jesus Alcalá, a Spanish-born lawyer and samhällsdebattör ("society-debater," or public intellectual) who in 1998 became chair of the Swedish chapter of Amnesty International. "There has existed a naiveté in Sweden, a credulousness -- one expects well of others. That naiveté was a mark of the decent society," Alcalá explained. He feels that "much of that is gone" in today's Sweden (Lundqvist 1999). (I would be remiss not to mention that Alcalá is presently under investigation by a government prosecutor for possible financial misconduct. It is alleged that while he administered a small development-aid organization, money intended for Latin America found its way into his personal account.)

²⁷ Von Schreeb appears not to be alone in his readiness to trust other people, if one looks at sociologist Thorleif Pettersson's (1994:53) data from the colossal European Value Systems Study. Respondents could choose between the statement, "one can have confidence in most people," or the statement, "one cannot be careful enough in one's interaction with people." Sixty percent of Swedes surveyed chose the former alternative. Among the sixteen European and North American nations included in the research, only Norwegians expressed an (insignificantly) higher level of confidence in people, at 61 percent. United States citizens were fifth, at 50 percent; the British were tenth, at 42 percent; and the (West) Germans thirteenth, at 31 percent.

Examples of this trust-affirming, anti-cynical discourse appear several times in my field-notes. It was particularly surprising for me when it came up in activists' language about their political opponents. I met with an elderly eldsjäl -- "fire-soul" or staunchly dedicated person -- named Elisabeth, who was a leader in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Though a lifelong leftist, she rebutted my critical remarks about the Moderate (i.e. conservative) Party: "One mustn't assume that most Moderates are cynical; they are not. They really believe that people live better lives when pressed, pushed." In like manner, a politically engaged Stockholm student with one Chilean-born parent told me that there is "no cynicism" in Sweden: "Not even the skinheads. They are just dumb. They lack a larger perspective." ²⁸

²⁸ This sanguine tone also appears in a statement by a twelve-year-old girl, collected in a study of children (Hartman 1986:166). "In school," she writes, "a portion [of the pupils] are of course tough and such, but I believe that under the tough, hard shell, everyone is nice." In the next sentence, she presents a series of paired antonyms, including snäll ("nice") and dum ("dumb"). This is a dominant duo in schoolchildren's language about their classmates; it is used to distinguish between those one likes and those one dislikes in much the same way as the American English pair "nice" and "mean." Two of my students in Uppsala did a research project in which they interviewed schoolchildren. During the class
(continued...)

The anti-cynical stance faces frequent tests.²⁹ One example of this is the dilemma confronted by Swedes who hide refugees whose applications for asylum have been turned down by the state. Often the refugees have strong grounds for fearing a return to their homeland -- grounds which the Swedish immigration authorities have ignored. But sometimes refugees have been known to fabricate their past travails. If the Swedes providing shelter discover such misrepresentations, they may feel betrayed by their beneficiaries. "Many feel burned when they have been duped by this person whom they have helped," Ploughshares³⁰ activist Per Herngren comments. How to handle this predicament? "We must let ourselves be duped sometimes," he says (Möller 1995:78). Herngren feels that it is better now and then to

discussion of their work, they explained that dum connotes more than simply "dumb," and can certainly, like the word "mean," be used to condemn aggressive behavior. Yet dum nonetheless retains the suggestion that the person may not know better, whereas the American "mean" implies a more essentialized nastiness, suggesting that some sadism may be part of the person's very nature.

²⁹ As Mary Douglas (1986:1) observes, "writing about cooperation and solidarity means writing at the same time about rejection and mistrust."

³⁰ "Ploughshares" is the self-description of certain activist groups that engage in nonviolent civil disobedience to promote nuclear disarmament and social justice.

help someone who does not deserve it than to deport innocent people to a fate of torture or execution.³¹

In a less somber vein, let me mention a personal encounter with the trope of Swedish guilelessness. As a native New Yorker, I considered myself unable to be conned, but an enterprising Swede found the Achilles heel that battalions of Manhattan racketeers had overlooked. Deep within the august Uppsala University library, a man who appeared to be in his forties told me, in elegant Gothenburg Swedish, that he was researching certain Swedish poets (I remember hearing venerable names like Rydberg and Heidenstam) and their conceptions of the beauty of the world. He had forgotten his wallet at home in a distant suburb, and could he borrow forty crowns (then worth about six dollars) to make some photocopies and have a little lunch? The money was to be returned by post. I recall that in my mental calculations of his credibility, the fact that he was a Swede and the fact (I believed) that he was a scholar of poetry weighed about equally -- how could such a creature be anything but

³¹ Herngren says that the immigration judges put the burden of proof on the refugees: they must be able to prove that they have experienced or been genuinely threatened with persecution (Möller 1995:78).

upstanding? I later learned from a friend that this man was a known alcoholic and swindler, but to me his skillful enactment of Swedish and scholarly stereotypes was worth the price of a bottle of cheap wine.

The uses of utopia

The winding path of this chapter takes me back to the "rumors of utopia" with which I began. None of my informants (excepting one child) ever told me that Sweden was a utopia. But many drew upon conventionally recognized (if not necessarily widely believed) images of Swedish preeminence in order to make their political points, as I will describe below.

"The core of our national identity," Daun claims, "is the idea that we are modern, highly developed. That we have 'come far'" (Brune 1992:82). Daun (1994:175-179) has charted the Swedish self-stereotype of being a supremely modern, even avant-garde society. He suggests that the key ingredients of the collective sense of advancement include not only technical and economic progress but also "social welfare and justice, social equality, sexual liberation, rationality, the willingness of men to help with house work, a low degree of

church attendance, soft leadership at places of work, [and] anti-authoritarian child-rearing" (Daun 1991b:111).

Swedish and foreign news media offer no shortage of assertions that Sweden is advanced -- in many cases more advanced than any other land -- in matters ranging from paternity leave to breast-cancer screening to mobile-telephone usage (e.g. Palmgren 1994:A5). For example, "Swedish Children Have the Best Teeth" (Svenska barn har bäst tänder) read a large headline on the top of the first page of the reputable conservative newspaper Svenska Dagbladet (1995).

Such media exclamations may be one barometer of the cultural salience of claims of Swedish super-modernity. But I should emphasize that I am reading these claims as rhetorical conventions, tropes, clichés; they are part of the symbolic "debris of the past" that can be deployed for "all kinds of present purposes," again to borrow Herzfeld's (1997a:24) formulation. These tropes have an existence independent of whether or not large numbers of Swedes actually believe that Sweden is singularly advanced. "I am very certain that the vast majority of Swedes have never regarded themselves as 'international standard-bearers,'" observes Al Burke, a former sociologist who is now editor and

publisher of the Nordic News Network (personal communication, July 30, 2000).

I asked Åsa Geivall, the treasurer of a solidarity association focused on the Philippines, whether Sweden was a leader in matters of international solidarity. "No," she said, "I don't think so, I don't know. I don't want to set such a title. I feel that we try. Sometimes it goes well, sometimes not." Her modest, hesitating response was common among activists. In a more critical vein, the socially-engaged journalist Birgitta Albons told me that Swedes have "beaten our chests and said that we are so good [at international solidarity], but it is rather quickly becoming clear that we are not, we are not better than anyone else, although we have given ourselves such a reputation around the world."³²

The literary scholar Stefan Helgesson (1996:B1), in a reminiscence of his boyhood as an adopted African in Sweden, similarly charges Swedes with prideful self-conceptions. "I finally became Swedish," he writes, not by learning the famous Swedish midsummer rituals, "but because I accepted

³² These words may be evidence for what Burke (1994:15) calls "the Swedish habit of relentless self-criticism."

that Sweden stood for the good," that the Swedes "stood for sound, humane, radical values." Helgesson claimed that this Swedish self-image was so pervasive that he imbibed it despite the opposing evidence of his own experience: "Sweden was my personal boyhood hell, where I was called 'nigger-devil,' picked last for the soccer team, [and] tied with rope to the school door" by classmates.

Like Albons, Helgesson reiterates the stereotype that Swedes see themselves as morally advanced. He uses this idea as a rhetorical foil by means of which to judge current events -- in particular, the murder of an immigrant from the Ivory Coast. Both commentators want to push their compatriots to live up to their putative moral principles. But if the notion of Swedish smugness is a cliché, the protest against that notion has itself become a cliché.

The trope of self-righteousness is also deployed by the political right, with a twist: the message is not that Swedes should live up to their alleged pretensions but that they should abandon them. Thus the neoliberal economic historian Mauricio Rojas prescribes a conversion from Swedes' "feeling of chosenness, of moral superiority" to "Continental cynicism's defiant openness" (Brune 1992:82), while a sarcastic Dagens Nyheter columnist mocks the notion that

"Sweden Shall Save the World" (Sander 1994:A2). A common conservative strategy is to claim that Swedes feel that the world needs them, while recent events demonstrate that it does not. Such reasoning blossomed after rival Norway's 1993 success in negotiating an Israeli-PLO peace accord -- an event which prompted one commentator to declare that "Sweden's third and peaceful great-power period in foreign affairs is at an end" (Wallner 1993:A1). A conservative newspaper, Sydsvenska Dagbladet, drew the moral of the story on its editorial page: "First the Berlin Wall fell. Then came the disarmament and democratization of the East. And now the breakthrough in the Middle East. The world has reached adulthood. It gets along without Swedish morality and Swedish neutrality" (Sydsvenska Dagbladet 1993).

Sweden is highest

In a playful twist on this theme of being advanced, a journalist protesting Swedish refugee policy wrote an article entitled, "We are the best at deporting refugees." Mimicking the conventional tone of 'we're-at-the-top' journalism, the article begins:

Sweden is highest at Europe's top. The Swedish police are more effective than any of their European colleagues in the art of sending away refugees who received rejections on their asylum applications. . . . Just now [January 1994] there is a particular hurry to send Kosovo-Albanians back to Serbian terror, rapes, destitution and plundered homes. 1600 per month are deported from Sweden (Steen-Johnsson 1994:B1).

The author then deploys a sports metaphor: Swedes who hide refugees in their homes, she says, "carry on an honorable obstruction against the leading police team in the European league" (Steen-Johnsson 1994:B1). Building on popular tropes of Sweden being the most advanced, the author breaks with convention to ask: most advanced at what? One can also be best at something dishonorable.³³

³³ For a comparable case, see Herzfeld's (1997:201-206) discussion of how the novelist Andreas Nenedakis experienced the contradiction between the "anti-immigrant hostility of the Swedish police" and the "much-vaunted liberalism of the Swedish state." As a Greek political refugee in Sweden in the late 1960s, Nenedakis wrote a rather bitter novel called The Policemen of Stockholm.

The sense of being best is sometimes linked rhetorically to a responsibility to be good. In Norway, ice-skater Johann Olav Koss urged his countrymen to contribute ten crowns to an international development-aid organization for every Norwegian gold medal won in the Liljehammar Olympics. Koss gracefully couples athletic success with global solidarity in a newspaper interview with the title, "Eritrea's children melted the ice-king's heart" (Johansson 1994:A6).

To have a heart of ice is not cool in Scandinavia; social norms proscribe open indifference and cynicism. That people deserve and should receive care and protection is something Swedes often describe as självklar, self-evident (e.g. Sjökvist 1994:D1). Accusations of cynicism may thus be more powerful in Sweden than in an America where, as Jane Wagner once quipped, "no matter how cynical you become, it's never enough to keep up" (Maggio 1996:156).

The comments of abovementioned journalist Birgitta Albons provide an example of a carefully framed accusation of bureaucratic cynicism. She told me about a young soldier from Serbia who refused orders to kill an innocent Croat, then fled for his life and made his way to Sweden. The Swedish authorities wanted to send him back to Serbia. As Albons explained, the youth "has refused to do the sort of

thing that the whole world has condemned there, and should really be regarded as a hero, that he managed to refuse in those situations, but instead the Swedish authorities punish him." The effect of the immigration board's action, Albons said, is to "hollow out" Swedish language about human rights. By noting this hollowing out of humane ideals, Albons inscribed her protest amidst nostalgic public yearnings for the preservation of trust and honesty against a perceived rising tide of indifference.

To reject indifference is to reject passivity, to refuse to be a bystander to the world's travails. In the eyes of some Swedes, neutral Sweden was an eerily complicit bystander during the Second World War, when the solidly anti-Nazi Social Democrats had to share power with right-wing forces. Sweden's immigration policy at the time was characterized by what researcher Wilhelm Agrell (1995:B2) calls a "systematic and consistent effort to prevent fleeing Jews from coming to Sweden" (see also Koblik 1988; Boëthius 1991; Levine 1996).³⁴ Some commentators suggest that the guilt feelings generated

³⁴ Parallels can be drawn to Canada's more severe exclusionary policies, which are chronicled in Abella and Troper's (1991) book, None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe 1933-1948.

during the war were a principal cause of Sweden's postwar role as "humanity's promised land," a leader in accepting refugees (Lindroth 1994:185).³⁵ An Österbybruk refugee-center employee, for example, told me that the memory of Sweden deporting Estonians into Stalin's clutches informs her work today.³⁶

One should not stand by while others suffer -- there is no excuse for doing so in today's tightly interconnected world, aid and asylum advocates told me. The notion that relationship creates responsibility was a recurring theme for them. The protest outside Saab's warplane factory (mentioned in Chapter 1) drew such connections in an elegant way. Making reference to the Swedish weapons manufacturer Bofors, the largest banner read: "The refugees are here because

³⁵ In a similar vein, Marquis Childs (1961:xviii) once mused: "who can say what a strain on the conscience it must have been to have come through the war still relatively prosperous and untouched."

³⁶ Ethnologist Karl-Olov Arnstberg (1992:4) offers an opposing explanation for the strength of Swedish anti-racist attitudes: Swedes oppose racism and anti-immigrant sentiments "not only and perhaps not primarily because they affect the immigrants, but because they affect our own self-conception, our Swedish self-confidence." Anti-racist efforts, Arnstberg argues, are efforts to restore the idea of Swedish goodness. "To be Swedish was the finest thing on earth," but violent acts by the extreme right have threatened that pleasant collective self-image (Arnstberg 1992:4; cf. Peterson 1997).

Bofors is there." The message may sound exaggerated. On the other hand, Save the Children reported that of the children seeking asylum in Sweden between 1990 and 1994, 79 percent were fleeing war-torn countries to which Swedish firms during the same period were selling armaments (Westander 1995:18).

Someone who refuses to be indifferent to this interwoven world is Pelle Strindlund, a young eldsjäl (dedicated person) whom I portray in detail in Chapter 5. He explained why he stands on the street shaking a collection can for aid efforts in Latin America and elsewhere:

I mean, if I rattle in a hundred crowns I'm lucky .
 . . I would rather give, donate a hundred crowns to
 avoid standing two hours in Celsius Square . . .
 but on the other hand I realize that no, I shall
stand there, as a moral protest so that the
 passivity of others becomes so evident.

On one occasion, while standing with Pelle giving out election flyers, I asked him why he was more successful than other activists in getting people to take the flyers. He said that because of his upbeat demeanor, people perhaps

assumed that he was handing out valuable coupons. He was glad to invert the stereotype of the dour activist.

Such reiteration and disruption of stereotypes was also achieved by Per Herngren, a leader of civil disobedience actions at weapons factories. In an interview concerning refugee policy, he declared: "Immigrants are not better people than Swedes, it would be racist to believe some such thing. They lie just as much as we do" (Möller 1995:78). Here Per turns on its head the common if unspoken assumption that many immigrants are not as well-socialized and reliable as native Swedes are. Nearly no one thinks that immigrants lie less often than native Swedes do, so by raising that possibility -- and then protesting against it on grounds of equality -- Per pushes people to rethink their own prejudices. Here we have a clear case of the "deformation of social and aesthetic convention" used as a means to "create new insight and understanding" (Herzfeld 1993:251).

A different sort of dramatization of stereotypes occurs in the play "Mirad, a Boy from Bosnia," performed for school pupils at Stockholm's City Theater. The play depicts Bosnians hanging onto life amidst such horrors as having to collect a relative's body parts from a mine-field. Then, in a quiet moment, a woman and a man are discussing where they

might flee. The man suggests, how about Sweden? "Yes," answers the woman, "Sweden -- they are a hospitable people" (ett gästvänligt folk), a people who are friendly to guests.

These were heavy words about Swedish hospitality, a member of the audience remarked to me afterwards: Are we welcoming to outsiders? Viewers of the play may have been aware of less positive stereotypes about Swedes, images that Åke Daun (1991a) once probed in an essay entitled, "Are Swedes as cold as they seem to be?" The play's use of a complimentary image -- "a hospitable people" -- thus teased and challenged the public.

Thus are some of the rhetorical strategies of the socially concerned. These Swedes appropriate and rework "rumors of utopia" in an ongoing struggle over Swedish identity. What does it mean, they ask, to be modern and advanced, to reject passivity, and to maintain a disquieting awareness of one's connections to the world? To these activists, Swedish identity means having to do one's share and meet one's obligations (att göra rätt för sig; see Herlitz 1991:12-14). One must pay one's debts, both debts of gratitude (tacksamhetsskuld) for being among modernity's chosen people, and amends for having sometimes failed to live up to that identity and that responsibility. "Duty before

everything else" (plikten framför allt) reads the motto inscribed on Sweden's former one-crown coins. Like Sweden's traditionalist dissenters, these old coins still circulate.

Chapter 3. Repressing Aggressors:

The Culture of Gentleness

You are ready to aid in the shaping and application of those wise restraints that make men free.

- declaration used in
conferring law degrees at
Harvard, composed by John
MacArthur MaGuire (n.d.)

A Swedish film student once told me about her impressions of America after a year at New York University. Outside her Manhattan apartment building, she recalled, waiting taxi drivers and motorists picking up friends would honk their horns at any hour of the day or night. Why couldn't they see that such behavior makes life unpleasant for everyone around? Why didn't they think of that? She sounded puzzled.

For me as a former New Yorker, there was nothing puzzling in the scenario: taxi drivers would make more money if they were always on the move; persons picking up friends

would save time by announcing the car's presence with the horn. The fact that the whole neighborhood might be woken up was simply a part of life in New York.

But surely the drivers themselves would sometimes have been similarly awakened on other occasions, the young filmmaker replied. She felt that such experiences should have led them to understand the discomfort they were causing, and then to modify their behavior. Wouldn't that make life better for everyone?

This was one of many occasions on which Swedes spoke to me about the absurdity of situations in which individual and collective goals diverged. The horn-honking was "smart for one, dumb for all" to borrow Robert Frank's (1999:146) phrase. An individual taxi driver who chose not to honk would lose income vis-a-vis those who did honk. But a customary or legal proscription against horn use by stationary vehicles would have removed the problem without changing the relative position of any individual driver. Here as in many other "smart for one, dumb for all" dilemmas,

a collective constraint has resolved the matter in Sweden but not in America.³⁷

In this chapter, I show how certain collective constraints are the price of a solidaristic society, and how the imposition and maintenance of such constraints are matters of cultural contestation. Solidarity has "shown itself to be rare, unless a certain compulsion is exerted," a Swedish scholar has noted (Wärneryd 1983:99). Such compulsion may take the form of social pressure (as in the case of sumptuary standards) or legal regulation (as of prostitution), or both. By the term "collective constraints," I thus mean both expectations and laws that hold social actors (i.e. persons and institutions) accountable to a larger community. "Any society imposes normative standards on its members," Mary Douglas (1996:35,41) maintains, and "accountability [is] the context of community solidarity."

³⁷ On efforts to "restrain interpersonal competition," Frank (1985:247) makes a wider European-American comparison. "Many European countries," he notes, "take considerably stronger legislative steps than we take in the United States. Yet such steps would inevitably involve further restrictions on behavior, something that American political sentiment has never much favored." Triandis (1995:102), by contrast,

(continued...)

Much of the behavior targeted by such normative standards may be classified as "smart for one, dumb for all." Examples range from minor daily disturbances to matters debated in the media. For instance, I remember how, on a crowded platform at Stockholm's Central Station, a teenager picked up his hefty backpack and swung it over his shoulders onto his back, nearly grazing the face of my colleague. "He acts as if he's the only person in the world," the near-victim said to me, sotto voce. Similar charges of solipsism are found in public expressions of ire over the salaries and golden parachutes of executives. Whether the social infractions are minor or great, those pointing them out often ask -- unwittingly echoing Kant's (1959:39) "categorical imperative" -- "What if everyone were to act that way?"

In the pages that follow, I consider collective constraints concerning self-promotion, consumption, remuneration of executives, prostitution, pornography, and traffic. At the chapter's end, I examine the widespread portrait of Swedes as a people smothered by stringent social expectations -- and the place of that portrait in struggles

suggests that Sweden and the United States share an emphasis on voluntarism, such that "often people can ignore the collective's directives."

over how to label and classify social reality. I suggest that if the Swedish level of collective constraints is the price of a solidaristic society, it may be a price worth paying. Some of the norms serve to prevent interpersonal competition from sabotaging the quality of communal life; some embody majoritarian classifications of certain behavior, such as hiring prostitutes, as ignorant or evil; and many of the constraints increase most people's freedom, by restricting the freedom of those in a position to bully others.

Codes of modesty

Before Sweden's 1994 parliamentary elections, each political party presented on television a short campaign film. In the Social Democratic film, the former and future prime minister, Ingvar Carlsson, described his youthful encounter with Chicago. Seeing the deep poverty amidst plenty, Carlsson said, "I was almost proud to live in a country like Sweden" (Social Democratic Party 1994).

Almost proud? Would an American leader seeking re-election ever be almost proud to live in the United States? Carlsson "inscribed" his utterance "in a code of modesty," to

use Marianne Gullestad's language (Gullestad 1992:192; see Daun 1996:175-178). He was aware that a boastful patriotism would be unacceptable in this (or any other) circumstance.

Ingvar Carlsson may or may not be a modest man in some inward sense (see Kratz 1996); that question lies beyond the reach of an anthropology hesitant to speculate about "individual subjectivities" (Herzfeld 1997b:25). But he seems to be someone who successfully meets cultural expectations of self-backgrounding (rhetorically minimizing his own prominence), as another public occasion helped to show. Carlsson was Sweden's representative to an International Olympic Committee meeting on March 7th, 1997, at which the I.O.C. named the five countries that were still in the running to host an upcoming Olympic Games. Sweden was one of the lucky five, but while the representatives of the other four chosen nations flaunted their good fortune with flags, victory gestures and exuberant cries, Carlsson remained somber. Asked why, he explained that at such a moment it is important to think about all the nations that had put effort and hope into unsuccessful bids.

The norm of modesty shows up obliquely in a piece of reportage concerning a European Union working group on condom standardization. All countries were in agreement that the

minimum length should be 16 centimeters, the author observes, "until the Norwegians were overcome by hubris and demanded 17." The Swedish representative accepted the change gamely: "An extra centimeter doesn't matter. One simply rolls up the part that is left over" (Skagermark 1994:C14). Modesty prevailed.

Expectations of modesty were evident in my own social circles in Sweden, political and apolitical alike. I had to get used to the self-deprecations of others. Pelle (whom I quoted in Chapter 2) customarily began telephone messages by saying, "It's only Pelle," a formulation that I heard others use as well. A law student I knew, Ulrika, copied some photographs from a family outing and mailed them to a female classmate. She deliberately selected those images in which her own appearance was least appealing, believing that to do otherwise would be pretentious.

On several occasions, my anxiously polite demeanor (or so I imagined it) failed to deter me from infracting the code of self-backgrounding. Lotta (the anthropology graduate student referred to in Chapter 1) quietly reminded me that I tended to mention Harvard, and the names of my professors there, all too frequently. She also called my attention to

one of my more starkly unacceptable remarks.³⁸ At the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, where I was a visiting researcher, I made a public presentation of my work. Lotta later asked me how it had gone. My talk was merely okay, I replied, but luckily it had shone relative to the lifeless presentation by the day's other speaker.

I might as well have said that I sell drugs to children. Astonished by my rivalrousness, Lotta explained that one should not compare oneself with others, and that one should never enjoy another person's failure. If I had felt that the other man's presentation was poor, she said, I should have thought about whether I could help him make it better in the future. One day, Lotta added, I might be the one in need of help.

Lotta's warning against conceit -- like Carlsson's demure words -- may make one wonder whether more than social opprobrium awaits the violator of the expectations of modesty. Is there also a largely implicit conception of a system of requital, of "compensation" (Emerson 1968:93-127)

³⁸ My error of etiquette in this instance was of heuristic value to me, a fact that bears out Herzfeld's (1999) claim that fieldwork is a situation in which "making a mistake is a virtue, possibly the only virtue."

or karma or nemesis (see Weil 1956:15), whereby the universe eventually catches up with the prideful? Certain Swedish proverbs might make one think so: "When pride is in the cottage, the fall is at the door"; "Pride destroys itself"; and (in a more enigmatic mode) "The devil wipes his tail with the poor man's pride" (Daun 1996:177). Moreover, the inhabitants of premodern Swedish villages believed that prideful actions provoked an ominous envy that could result in witchcraft, and "many minor witch trials had a jealousy motif" (Gaunt 1985:103).

The cosmic-requital hypothesis might also find support in Sontag's (1969:26) portrayal of a Swedish "system of anxieties, a perception of the world as extremely dangerous."³⁹ In this system, "the source of treachery" may be in oneself, and "it's anyone's guess which has psychological priority, the fear of another's aggression or

³⁹ Burke disputes Sontag's assessment: "Most Swedes exhibit a high level of trust -- probably due in large measure to their comparatively secure upbringing -- and often rush in where angels fear to tread. I think, for example, of all the Swedes I've met who have hitch-hiked around the U.S. as if it were the simplest and least problematical thing in the world." As for Sweden's preventive health and safety measures, Burke suggests, pace Sontag, that these should be understood as an "open and direct confrontation [with] life's dangers, as opposed to burying one's head in the sand" (Al Burke, personal communication, July 30, 2000).

of one's own." In this "taboo-ridden country," Sontag finds, "the most severe policing is done by each Swede himself."

Does the widespread unease about violations of the social code bespeak a wider teleology? Or to ask a Durkheimian question, is this a case in which the cosmic code mirrors the social code?

Sumptuary norms

Sumptuary standards often solve important conflicts between individual and collective benefits. For example, women collectively would gain in mobility and orthopedic health from a norm proscribing high heels; but lacking such a norm, any individual woman is likely to lose in status competitions against her sisters by unilaterally declining to wear high heels (Frank 1999:157-158). Collective pressures thus prevent costly arms races, particularly with respect to goods that index social status (as described later in this chapter for the case of sport-utility vehicles).

As sumptuary expectations involve the regulation of habits and expenditure on moral and religious grounds, one may say that Sweden has been undergoing a quarter century of sumptuary secularization. Once-stringent standards

concerning acceptable levels of consumption have eroded, and commercial culture -- animated by advertising -- has achieved an omnipresent hegemony. This transformation may be seen as part of a larger, international "consumers' revolt," one that Mary Douglas (1996:111) approvingly describes as "a revolt against the despotism of neighbours whose business it is to know and judge everything that is done, what food is eaten . . . who is wearing clothes that look too seductive by local standards."

One site of strong sumptuary standards has been the cooperative movement. In his study of Swedish institutions in 1930s and 1940s, Marquis Childs (1947:50) writes that leaders in that movement saw it as "a brake to halt the excesses of capitalism." The cooperatives -- in manufacturing, agriculture and retail trade -- offered a competitive challenge to monopolies and cartels, but they also called for a shift in shopping practices. Private merchants encouraged buying on credit, which led to overconsumption and frequent indebtedness. By contrast, the cooperative movement required its customers to pay at or before the time of purchase. The present-day successors to these enterprises continue to challenge prevailing commercial practices. The widespread cooperative supermarket chain

called Konsum has rejected (or, in recent years, partially curtailed) the use of "sale" pricing and related marketing techniques that entice customers to buy more.

Other sumptuary restraints may be less formally institutionalized and more dependent upon public opinion. The polemicist Roland Huntsford (1971:254-256) described late-1960s opposition to the residences of the wealthy, which consisted of villas in exclusive Stockholm suburbs. He observed that Dagens Nyheter had once published an aerial photograph to show how much land was monopolized by such homeowners: "It was wrong, said the newspaper, because it was a privilege, and because it encouraged selfishness" (Huntsford 1971:255).⁴⁰ Three decades later, the segregated precincts of the moneyed still attract occasional opprobrium. For example, a Dagens Nyheter journalist criticized the arrival in Sweden of what she saw as "the American model" of enclaved housing development, which offers buyers the comfort of knowing in advance that "the neighbors are like themselves" in lifestyle and social class (Dahlgren 1999:B1).

⁴⁰ As Annika Almqvist (2000:8) observes, the dream of a free-standing private house "has been associated with the traditional nuclear family and its gender roles, with private consumption and with injustices in housing."

An American technology forecaster, Paul Saffo, recently observed that "Swedes are very uncomfortable with new money, and especially conspicuous consumption." Describing Sweden's successful Internet entrepreneurs of the late 1990s, Saffo commented: "I don't expect to see Swedish dot-com CEOs riding around Stockholm in BMWs, Ferraris and Harleys any time soon." But there are signs that the sumptuary standards are beginning to unravel. "There may be a change," Saffo noted, "as the dot-com generation comes into its own. The company heads certainly are as restrained as their elders, but some of the new money at the fringes may be getting a bit flashy" (McGuire 2000:59).

Turning to a very different enclave, I should say something about sumptuary standards within my circle of left-leaning comrades. Dietary choices were frequently calibrated against group expectations, particularly with regard to animal welfare and to multinational corporate practices. In Chapter 5, I describe Åsa's rejection of my gift of pineapple juice at a dinner -- a stark but rare instance of sumptuary correction. Regarding consumption of meat (or nonhuman animals, as Pelle would put it), no single standard existed in my network, but it was important to have some sort of explanation of one's choices at the frequent commensal

moments when the conversation focused on the food. Vegans took the most demanding road, followed by the differing grades of vegetarians. Next were those who ate meat rarely, subject to certain conditions. Åsa, for example, would occasionally eat game killed by hunters in a rural area, but she avoided the output of factory farms. Others selected free-range chickens or simply their eggs. Even unabashed carnivores (and there were some) abstained from McDonald's hamburgers, on the grounds that the company bought its beef from Brazilian ranchers who were gradually devouring the Amazonian ecosystem.

Other salient consumption questions included automobiles (to be discussed below) and investments. Mutual funds presented a new and sometimes delicate set of sumptuary choices. The 1990s were a decade of growing public interest in purchasing corporate equity through such instruments, in Sweden as in the United States. What was a socially concerned person to do, when faced with the possibility of acquiring attractive returns from a booming stock market? Was it a good idea to invest, on the grounds that leftists have little money, and this appeared to be an easy way to get hold of more? Or was it wrong to profit from multinational corporations that were laying off Swedish workers en masse,

outsourcing production to lands with the least protection of labor and the environment, and merging with one another to build monopolistic behemoths?

The idea of making money in the market was troubling in three dimensions, my hosts told me. First, investors participated in the bad behavior of the multinationals. Second, investments offered rewards but did not require productive labor. Most of those on the political left believed that wealth arises ultimately from human labor, so they tended to wonder whose labor they were expropriating in collecting dividends and capital gains. A third objection was to the idea of speculation; the chaos of the casino economy and the greed of its gamblers were distasteful.

For many of my informants, the issue of investing was immaterial, because they did not have money to invest. Those with greater resources were divided between buyers of funds, abstainers, and buyers of ethically identified funds. Options for would-be ethical investors blossomed over the course of the 1990s. At mid-decade, several popular choices came from a company called Banco. These included the Swedish Environmental Fund (Svensk Miljöfond) and the Samaritan Fund (Samaritfonden). The former limited its equity purchases to Sweden's thirty most ecologically conscientious companies, as

ranked by an organization called the Natural Step (Den Naturliga Steget). The latter eschewed stocks in the weapons, tobacco and alcohol industries, and each year donated two percent of the fund's total value to eight Christian organizations involved in health and empowerment efforts among the impoverished, in Sweden and around the world. By 2000, Banco's list included seven different idealistic funds.

I saw few signs of social enforcement for sumptuary standards pertaining to investment. Unlike food, mutual funds were not a staple of conversation. Most people were reticent with regard to their financial lives (although less so regarding income than wealth). As a dialogical ethnographer, however, I occasionally felt obliged to admit my own stock-market presence: a dozen shares in the Lawter Chemical Company, purchased years earlier by my grandparents on account of my excitement over a high-school economics class. Lotta found this investment incongruous with my professed social concern, and urged me to liquidate my small holding. Most disturbing to her was the fact that I had not bothered to keep track of the environmental record of this chemical manufacturer; at the very least, she said, ownership carried that responsibility.

Shooting down golden parachutes

For a Swedish politician to "cheat on an expense account, misuse a bank card, [or] dodge taxes" is a deadly sin, Rolf Alsing (1997:2) observes. Deputy Prime Minister Mona Sahlin found that out in 1995, when she lost her standing as Ingvar Carlsson's heir apparent -- and resigned her cabinet post in disgrace -- after having bought candy and diapers with a government credit card. She had also neglected to pay several parking tickets.⁴¹ (The contrast with American political ethics does not stop there: Alsing [1997:2] noted that Swedish politicians could "make love with whomever they wish and as often as they wish," but that to get caught driving while intoxicated would mean the end of a political career.)

⁴¹ Burke points out that the "aggravating factor in her case was that her role within the Social Democratic Party at the time was to persuade the women of the rank and file, most of them in low-paid occupations, to accept austerity measures." When it then turned out that she was unable to pay her own way, despite a combined family income far above average, the impression was one of hypocrisy and manipulation. Opinion polls indicated that women were more critical of her behavior than men were (Al Burke, personal communication, July 30, 2000).

"The ethics of making money and hanging onto it," Arne Ruth (1986:247) once wrote, "have been enshrined in an etiquette as rigorous and intricate as Victorian sexual morality." Ruth saw this etiquette as part of a larger Swedish code of moderation that, already in the early 1980s, was beginning to unravel. A growing number of individuals and "powerful interest groups," Ruth believed, had "lost the inhibitions of the lagom [moderation] code" (Ruth 1986:247).

In the 1990s, the principal transgressors of financial etiquette were not politicians like Sahlin; they were financiers and chief executives, the "industrial kings of Sweden" (as two of my informants call them in Chapter 4). These men -- there were almost no women among their ranks -- came to symbolize, for many, the excesses of Sweden's increasingly unrestrained capitalism. Income differentials had declined in Sweden between 1950 and 1980, but by 1995 they were back to the 1950 level; the average CEO had an income 26 times that of the average industrial worker (Sekund 1999).⁴² A steady stream of news reports described the mushrooming rewards at the top, such as a 40 percent rise in

⁴² By contrast, democratically elected heads of organizations -- in politics and popular movements -- had an average wage 3.5 times that of an industrial worker (Sekund 1999).

chief executives' remuneration between 1993 and 1995 (Jacobsson 1996:C1).

The issue of executive pay has remained alive in Sweden -- unlike in the United States.⁴³ Labor leaders in early 2000 criticized the compensation of a particularly well-rewarded corporate chieftain, Skandia's Lars-Eric Petersson, in a dispute that was covered by Swedish media. Economist Bo Södersten (2000) complained that it is "only in Sweden that successful corporate leaders are pilloried and forced to apologize for having done their jobs too well."

Even more controversial were executive severance-pay (or "parachute") contracts, which entered public consciousness after a banking crisis. Sweden deregulated its credit market in 1985, and Swedish banks took advantage of their new freedom by speculating in rising real-estate markets in Stockholm, London and elsewhere. When real-estate prices collapsed at the beginning of the 1990s, the banks were left with unmanageable debt and could only be rescued by the state

⁴³ In the United States as in Sweden, executive pay was a controversial public issue in the early 1990s. Bill Clinton denounced the excessive pay of CEOs during the 1992 election campaign, and he promised to take action to stem the increases. Average remuneration levels have more than tripled in the years since then, but the issue has disappeared from political discussion (Leonhardt 2000:5).

(not unlike the savings-and-loan bailout in the United States). Economists retrospectively estimated the direct cost to taxpayers to be 35 billion crowns (\$4.4 billion), with even larger costs ensuing for the economy as a whole (Sandström 1999a). The executives responsible for the financial disaster were in many cases relieved of their jobs by their boards of directors, but they took with them severance-pay packages of up to 4.4 million U.S. dollars (Sandström 1999a).

"They showed that their motto was 'Look after yourself and shit on others,'" a Left Party worker explained to me; "now at least we know what they think of us." Most of my hosts expressed similar ire, as did most newspaper columnists. Some of the outcry was over violations of social norms by the CEOs in question -- their readiness to profit from a national catastrophe -- but some of it was over the failure of the legal system to impose punishment.⁴⁴ There ought to be a law, my companions felt, to rein in powerful individuals such as these, who place themselves above widely accepted norms. An ethics commission within the Social

⁴⁴ Finland also suffered a banking crisis at this time, but there the executives fared worse: seven of them were sentenced to prison (Sandström 1999a).

Democratic Party later pondered the problem of parachutes and CEO salaries but was unable, or perhaps insufficiently motivated, to stem the tide.

Public awareness, however, did change: golden parachutes became a symbol of greed and lack of accountability.⁴⁵ When Lars Weiss was selected in 1999 as the new chief executive for the state-owned broadcasting company, Swedish Television, he and his employer agreed upon a severance package worth 3.8 million crowns (\$475,000). Weiss was to receive this sum whether he was fired or left voluntarily. A critical discussion ensued in the media, and Prime Minister Göran Persson publicly commented that the deal "suggests a lack of sensitivity, in light of the debate over perks and parachutes" (Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå 1999b). Chastened by politicians and journalists, Weiss reluctantly agreed to accept a revised employment contract: the parachute would

⁴⁵ In the decade's fascination with CEOs -- sometimes described as a pornography of riches -- golden parachutes were a symbol not only of greed but of a very desirable state of existence. Hence they were used in two mid-1990s advertising campaigns. First, Handelsbanken announced in brochures that it was "offering parachute agreements to all customers"; then the Post Office (Posten, which includes certain financial services) used the same idea in a billboard campaign. Both institutions were simply selling insurance and savings accounts.

open only if he were fired, not if he quit. Soon after, he decided -- for this and other reasons -- to decline the appointment.

A similar but less-publicized dispute has recently touched the Church of Sweden. It owns companies whose directors, in six instances, have parachute agreements; the largest provides for severance pay of almost one million U.S. dollars. "The church stands for justice, righteousness and truth," a member of its executive committee argues; it should steer clear of these "provocative" levels of remuneration or it will forfeit its credibility (Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå 1999a).

One can read these debates over executive severance pay as part of a struggle to affirm egalitarian principles by imposing collective constraints -- thus a struggle over the nature and demands of solidarity. Apart from devout laissez-faire economists, the executives had few supporters in public forums. But they considered their compensation justified -- particularly when they compared themselves to lavishly rewarded fellow CEOs elsewhere in Europe and in the United States. The public opposition to their levels and forms of remuneration may thus be seen as an effort to rein them in, to force them to play by Swedish rules. Most of the

executives, however, continued to prevail: parachutes in hand, they were able to laugh all the way to the bank. (Indeed, their imagined elation became a journalistic metaphor for their moral obliviousness: a typical newspaper report includes a photo of a laughing CEO next to the headline: "He got sacked -- and got 17 million" [Sandström 1999a]). It is worth noting that the abovementioned cases in which public pressure seemed to succeed in altering outcomes involved a public-sector company and a religious organization, not private corporations.

That CEOs would like to escape the collective constraints of Sweden is made evident in their threats to leave the country. On paper, many of them have been gone for decades: the dominant capital-owning families evade taxes by means of trusts in Sweden and in tax-shelter countries like Luxembourg, Switzerland, and especially Liechtenstein (New York Times 1996:F12). Yet corporate leaders perennially threaten to move themselves and their operations abroad -- particularly in the months before elections. A few follow through on their threats. "The well-situated announcing that they will leave the country has become a Swedish tradition," a Swedish Church employee told me. Such left-leaning critics regard the talk of emigration as anti-democratic bullying, a

strategic bluff used to influence voters and policy-makers (see Söderberg 1999). They point out that Sweden already has relatively light corporate taxation (albeit high taxes on individuals),⁴⁶ and that the executives would not necessarily flourish abroad. The corporate directors "are probably Sweden's least internationally sought-after labor-power," Jan Guillou (1997) jeers, and no one but their "Swedish buddies" would ever "give them millions in salary and parachutes."

The emergence of constraints on prostitution

If there were an Olympic Games for societal achievements, Sweden would win medals in labor conditions, environmental protection, children's welfare, public health and many other areas. But the field in which the nation would most consistently outclass its rivals, year after year, might well be women's empowerment. "Swedish women are the most equal," a Dagens Nyheter headline announces, and "comparative statistics [show that] sisters in the rest of the world are still far behind" (Öhrström 1997). No other

⁴⁶ According to the Economist (1999a:60), Sweden's corporate tax rates are lower than those of twelve of the other member states of the European Union. But interview surveys show that it is the high personal tax rates that most concern high-paid CEOs.

country has a higher percentage of women as parliamentarians⁴⁷ and cabinet ministers. Nor does any other nation have a larger fraction of women in the labor force (Öhrström 1997), thanks to job opportunities in the public sector and the support it provides to women in the private sector. Sweden leads the developed world in the percentage of professional and technical workers who are women (UNDP 1999:142). Countless social policies favor gender equality, including the system of parental leave whereby a fraction of the subsidy is forfeited if the father does not take time off to provide childcare. (This policy exemplifies the sort of curb on misguided and potentially escalating interpersonal competition that Robert Frank [1985, 1999] advocates in other realms. Proponents of the policy say that most fathers would like to be at home during part of their children's first years of life, but in the past they have hesitated to do so for fear of appearing insufficiently dedicated to their jobs and thereby losing promotions. The paternity-leave policy liberates them from this competitive dilemma by creating

⁴⁷ After the 1994 election, 41 percent of the members of parliament were women; the 1998 election brought the fraction up to 43 percent (Boëthius 1999:3).

economic incentives for all fathers to take some time off, thus removing the stigma from such leave.)

Swedish feminists rightly point out that there is still much that ought to be improved, yet "even in areas where women experienced the greatest injustices, the bitterness pales before the international statistics" (Öhrström 1997). After living in Sweden for some months, Susan Faludi (1996:66) concluded that "if ever women are to take their rightful place in society, it seems likely that it will happen first in Sweden."

Advancement in matters of gender equality is an important component of Swedes' "arsenal of distinction clichés," to borrow Orvar Löfgren's phrase (Löfgren 1993:167; see also Daun 1996:154). Such advancement may be contrasted with non-Nordic immigrants' "unwillingness to change old macho attitudes" (Månsson 1993:9), or with the backwardness in gender relations of other European Union members. In Germany, a Swedish journalist informs, women enter the halls of power only to serve coffee, popular newsmagazines display bare-breasted cover-girls, and the hottest media happening in 1999 was a rivalry between two female erotic stars. Of the men who make money on such media ventures, the male Swedish author asks: "Are they never ashamed?" (Jonsson 2000).

Nearly no one on the left, and few Swedes generally, would doubt that Swedish conceptions of gender equality are good and proper, and better than those in contrasting cultures. Persons who broke the consensus at a dinner of Left- and Green-Party people in other ways -- such as by arguing (as some did) that taxes should be lowered or eligibility for welfare subsidies tightened -- were still considered welcome presences. But a defense of southern European machismo or bare-breasted German magazine marketing would raise eyebrows and cause others to doubt that one had grasped the truth of human equality. I watched this happen to a Parisian exchange student who had justified his city's sex shows and brothels as an unavoidable expression of human nature ("Continental cynicism's defiant openness," in the phrase of Mauricio Rojas, quoted above [Brune 1992:82]). When his meal companions later discussed him in his absence, they concluded that his sexism was an occupational hazard of being French -- in such a society he could not have been expected to learn a proper understanding of gender.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ It happens that this Frenchman was considered by those in his circle to be not only sexist but sexy. It was not unusual for the same person (always a male) to be jointly classified in this fashion, whether he was of foreign background or was ethnically Swedish. Marianne Gullestad
(continued...)

Individuals who ignore strongly grounded "moral-aesthetic norms," Clifford Geertz (1973:129) has noted, "are regarded not so much as evil [but rather] as stupid, insensitive, unlearned, or in the case of extreme dereliction, mad." Such individuals have failed to perceive and conform to fundamental, collectively affirmed realities.

For all their strength, a peculiarity of Swedish norms regarding gender equality is that certain of them are of relatively recent origin. On matters of prostitution and (to a lesser extent) pornography, Sweden underwent a volte-face in the past thirty-five years as once-liberal attitudes and laws became more restrictive. An exploration of this transformation will show how today's uncompromising norms emerged from political contestation. The lesson is that solidarity and the collective constraints it sometimes requires are contingent and mutable historical outcomes, built upon the shifting sands of struggle.

A brief chronicle of sexuality in Sweden might begin with Mary Wollstonecraft's famous visit there in the 1790s.

"The manners of Stockholm are refined, I hear, by the

(1992:110) has suggested that there are tensions between romantic love and egalitarian gender roles in Norway, and one might expect to find similar tensions in Sweden.

introduction of gallantry," she wrote. But she was more impressed by the countryside, where "romping and coarse freedoms, with coarse allusions, keep the spirits awake" (Yapp 1983:781). The historian Franklin Scott (1988:364) believes that the 1800s were a time of sexual freedom for farm workers and for kings, nobles, and the wealthiest merchants; middle-class citizens were constrained by the fear that affairs would lead to "financial entanglements" or the "blot of scandal." The modest restraints engendered by nineteenth-century religious revivals ebbed in the twentieth century (Scott 1988:365).

Foreign curiosity regarding Swedish sexual practices increased during the heyday of the postwar welfare society. The introduction of mandatory sex education in all schools⁴⁹ was an event of worldwide notice in 1955, as was the public

⁴⁹ Linnér (1967) offers a sample lesson from a pedagogical guide published by the Swedish Board of Education. The lesson, for children of ages seven to nine, describes over two pages how "a sperm from daddy and an egg from mommy grow together, and that is the beginning of a little baby." If the children ask about conception, the teacher, if she "thinks it suitable and if she considers herself able," may explain that "the sperm can reach the egg after daddy has put his penis into the opening between mommy's legs" (Linnér 1967:131). Many Americans found such lessons shocking and inappropriate. Swedish educators pointed out that, lacking such lessons, children would likely acquire their notions about sexuality from their companions (Linnér 1967:180-181).

debate about sexual liberalism in the early 1960s (Schröder 1997:125). One factor that contributed to the international attention, Stephan Schröder (1997:125) suggests, was the attempt by foreign conservatives to use sexuality as a metaphor for Sweden and for the welfare state more generally, thereby discrediting both (Schröder 1997:130-131; see also Lennerhed 1994:97).

Sexual liberalism accelerated in the 1960s, as literary pornography flourished and erotic films faced decreasing levels of censorship. Public debate reached imaginative extremes far beyond actual policies and practices. An example was a best-selling book called The Erotic Minorities, by a young physician, Lars Ullerstam. It was published in Swedish in 1964, followed by an English edition from Grove Press two years later. Ullerstam proposed specialized cinemas, complete with "facilities for masturbation," to show pornographic films. Persons who enjoy viewing sex, he felt, "should not have to sit and suffer through hours of, say, [Ingmar Bergman's] The Silence and other depressing things in order to get a glimpse of a scene of intercourse" (Ullerstam 1966:150). Ullerstam called for the establishment of bureaus that would "arrange meetings between persons with complementary urge patterns"; he also wanted to see state-

supported brothels so that partygoers "would not have to ruin the party by the desperate search for a sexual partner" (Ullerstam 1966:149, 151).

Present-day readers may be tickled by the incongruous mix of hedonism and humanitarianism in Ullerstam's book. He declared that the "most important function of the brothel" would be to serve sexually under-served groups, such as the handicapped and homosexuals, of both genders. He even suggested reduced rates for the indigent (Ullerstam 1966:151). His humanitarian impulse found most dramatic incarnation in his plan for mobile prostitutes called "erotic Samaritans," who would provide masturbation and strip-teases to the "paralyzed, housebound patients, and old people," as well as to those "who are too inhibited" to visit brothels. Ullerstam hoped that "cheerful, generous, talented, and ethically advanced persons with the knowledge of the joys of giving would feel attracted to this humanitarian profession" (Ullerstam 1966:152).⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Ullerstam's surmise that young people of both genders would gladly choose these jobs "was probably consciously exaggerated," Lennerhed (1994:156) believes; but the proposal for brothels, she notes, "was meant seriously." Ullerstam fails to address the issue of who the sex workers would be.

Was Ullerstam a lone eccentric or a colorful expositor of a more widely shared point of view? In an introduction to the American edition of The Erotic Minorities, Yves de Saint-Agnes assures readers that the Swedish edition "has at no time been regarded as the work of a comedian or an erotomaniac" (Saint-Agnes 1966:xiii). Others had already called for government-run brothels (Lennerhed 1994:157). Later, in 1972, a proposal for such institutions was unsuccessfully put forward by some members of parliament (Boëthius 1999:3). So it appears that Ullerstam was not alone in championing his distinctive male vision of sexual utopia.

According to Lena Lennerhed (1994:157, 159), a historian of the sexual revolution, most of Ullerstam's readers appreciated his plea for sexual tolerance but saw prostitution as something negative. Yet she finds that there was no expressly feminist criticism of Ullerstam's ideas during this period, just as "pornography was practically never discussed from the point of view of gender" (Lennerhed 1994:157, 311). A government-commissioned Sexual Crimes Report in 1971 had no reservations about prostitution, which

was legal and widespread at the time⁵¹; the Report also proposed "that rapists be merely fined if their crime was judged to be 'less serious'" (Boëthius 1999:2).

"It took 27 years to change the course of public thinking 180 degrees," observes the left-feminist writer Maria-Pia Boëthius (1999:4). Consciousness of the subordination of women was forged during those years by political activism, investigative journalism, and further government investigations. Feminist groups began to protest the advertising posters for pornographic magazines in 1972 (Sandström 1999b), and that era's "New Left" criticized the earlier sexual liberals for having prepared the ground for the commercialization of sexuality (Lennerhed 1994:313). In 1981, a comprehensive governmental Prostitution Report documented the oppressive aspects of prostitution (which remained legal). That report's chief author, Hanna Olson, later published a widely discussed book about the murder and dismemberment of a prostitute in Sweden (Boëthius 1999:3).

⁵¹ Orfali (1991:438) reports that there were "more than a hundred 'massage parlors' and 'photographic studios'" operating as brothels in the Stockholm area between 1970 and 1972.

Feminist agitation also led to an important institutional transformation. Before the 1994 elections, a small group of media-savvy feminist intellectuals -- calling themselves the Support Stockings (Stödstrumporna) -- announced that they were considering the possibility of launching a women's party to advance a range of issues related to gender equality. Such a party might have drawn away significant numbers of Social Democratic voters, many of whom are women in "pink collar" public-sector jobs. The threat of such competition pushed the leadership of the Social Democratic Party to require gender parity on its candidate lists for the 1994 election: half of the seats that the party won would be allotted to women, half to men. The same quotas were maintained four years later at the next election, after which women accounted for half or more of the representatives for the Social Democratic, Green, and Left parties.⁵²

The changes in public attitudes and in parliamentary membership provided the conditions for a new policy on

⁵² Faludi (1996:69) finds it ironic that women have attained parliamentary authority at just the moment when "the real influence" has shifted to global financial and media institutions (and, one might add, to the European Union).

prostitution in 1999. The law made Sweden the first nation in the world to criminalize the buyer but not the seller of sexual favors. The government's commentary on the law states that this approach aims to avoid prosecuting "the party that, at least in most cases, is the weaker party, exploited by others to satisfy their sexual drive" (Boëthius 1999:1). The legislation cemented an emerging set of cultural expectations concerning prostitution. "When women finally achieve real political power," Boëthius (1999:2) declared, "they use it to create the taboos that we actually need: for example, that no man can 'buy' a woman."

The new law has been enforced by police. Big-city police departments received extra money to spend on finding and arresting persons who use prostitutes. Thirty-five men were arrested during 1999, the first year in which the prostitution law was in effect. Most have not yet been found guilty of a crime, because prosecutors and judges have been unsure as to what level of evidence is necessary for a conviction (Jewert 2000). For the women involved in prostitution, the new law has meant a decimated customer

base⁵³ and, for some who are illegal immigrants, extradition to less affluent lands. These were unintended consequences of a law designed to protect women. In Stockholm in 1999, the increased police watchfulness about prostitution led to the deportation of about twenty undocumented women, mostly to Russia, Estonia or Hungary (Jewert 2000).

If the law has been enforced by police, the taboo that it codifies has sometimes been bolstered by journalists. One recent example is an article in Aftonbladet, Sweden's largest-circulation daily newspaper, by Tiina Meeri and Helena Nordenberg (2000). These two journalists waited on the Stockholm street known for prostitution (Malmskillnadsgatan) until a middle-aged man approached them. He proposed to pay 1000 crowns (about \$125) for oral sex with both of them. While declining his bid, they interviewed him about his behavior. "How often do you buy sex then -- that is, how often do you break the law?" they asked, emphasizing his violation of the collective code. The reporters then ask him three times, in three different formulations, whether he

⁵³ Boëthius (1999:4) compares this unintended consequence to the way that anti-segregation laws in the United States once put out of business many black-owned enterprises that had operated in segregated niches. She observes that "no one today regrets the laws that forced integration."

and other johns regret their transgression: "Don't the men have a bad conscience? . . . Don't you yourself have any misgivings? . . . Haven't there been moments when you felt bad about having bought sex?" The repetition makes the interview almost a catechism of the collective condemnation of buying sex, and the use in each question of the presumptive negative ("don't you...") intensifies the didactic -- and condescending -- tone.

A different style of public commentary on prostitution argues that the men, like the women, are products of social circumstances. "The men are indeed also victims," says a Gothenburg social worker; "if one only listens, one hears that they are crying for help" (Svensson 1998a). Similarly, a psychotherapist at RFSU, the Swedish Association for Sex Education, observes that "both parties suffer from deficiencies from childhood. One doesn't get at the problem without giving both women and men understanding and help" (Svensson 1998b). These comments resonate with broader Swedish conceptions of collective responsibility: the attention to the social causalities of behavior, the call for empathy, and the hesitation about dismissing anyone as inherently evil. The new taboo on the purchase of sex is

thus integrated into the larger ethos of a sheltering society.

Are further collective constraints on the way? I note in Chapter 5 that Pelle and other vegans sometimes participate in protests against pornography, on the grounds that exploitation of the weaker by the stronger should always be contested. Pornography also attracts criticism from Anti-Fascist Action (AFA), an autonomous⁵⁴ group devoted primarily to combating neo-Nazis. Seven AFA members decided to undertake a protest action against a Playboy-like Swedish magazine called Slitz. They used photo-montage to create a parody of the magazine's cover, complete with a naked man whose face was that of the magazine's owner. Fifteen thousand copies of this poster were then distributed throughout Sweden. Unless people protest, explains a member of the AFA team, "porn risks becoming normalized" (Flodr 1999).

⁵⁴ Autonomous movements are decentralized activist initiatives favoring direct action over parliamentary engagement. They share a vision of small-scale participatory democracy, and they work to oppose "the arms race, nuclear power, patriarchy, and the housing shortage," as well as racism (Katsiaficas 1997:ix-x). For more about Anti-Fascist Action and related groups, see Abby Peterson's (1997) study of "youth and the drama of immigration in contemporary Sweden."

Some of the most recent anti-pornography efforts have been directed at government workers. A police investigation found that a parliamentary staffer was engaged in hard-core sex correspondence from his office computer. This led to new rules stating that while employees are permitted to do personal web-surfing and e-mailing, they may do so only "with good judgment" and not at "inappropriate" websites (Elander 2000). Meanwhile, Ulla Hoffman, a Left Party member of parliament, proposed that administration officials who are traveling on government business should be allowed to stay only at hotels that do not have pornographic material available on television (Dagens Nyheter 2000). The youth division of the Moderate Party responded by calling Hoffman an annoying moralist. But even some of my left-leaning Swedish friends, of both genders, feel that recent sex-related collective constraints have gone too far in the direction of, as one put it, "an exercise of feminist fundamentalism."

Further Swedish norm-building regarding the portrayal of women becomes more difficult as transnational communications intensify. The hard-core pornographic films on one of Sweden's cable-TV stations have provoked a recent flurry of protests and parliamentary inquiries, but the films are

distributed internationally and will soon be available to anyone with a broad-band connection to the Internet. (To the amazement of many business people, the largest Swedish phone company, Telia, promised that no pornography would be distributed over its new broad-band network. But financial analysts were unanimous in predicting that the promise will be broken, because revenues from Internet sex are so great that no company can afford to abstain [McLaughlin 2000].) A similar problem confronts those who lament the way in which male sports stars' sometimes predatory sexual behavior has become an instructive model for the teenage Swedish boys who idolize them (Steinvall 1998). Most of the athletes in question bear North American uniforms, but the news of their sexual deportment is trumpeted worldwide.

Might Sweden's collective constraint on the purchase of sex become the prototype for an international standard on the subject? It hardly seems likely, even at the level of the European Union. Nonetheless, as mentioned above in the discussion of sex education, Swedish societal ambitions have for decades been energized by the nation's reputation as an

"international symbol of modernity" (Ruth 1986:250).⁵⁵ This was evident to me when I took part in a three-day conference called "Women's Health and Futures" at Stockholm's House of the People (Folkets Hus) in March, 1994. In introducing the conference, one of the organizers, Bam Björling, announced that "there are people all around the world who are really interested in what happens in Sweden during these three days." To substantiate her claim, she read excerpts from letters she had received from women in various countries. Later, a professor from India, Gita Sen, declared that "Sweden has always stood as a catalyst of the kind of changes we wanted to see in the world." Once more the nation so stands. The law on prostitution, Boëthius (1999:4) writes, achieves "the introduction of a taboo that should always have existed: that no one can buy another person's sexuality -- not a woman's, not a man's and not a child's." With a hint of universalism in her eloquence, Boëthius adds that to allow purchases of that sort "is not worthy of a democracy."

⁵⁵ America has also had pronounced universalistic hopes, and "Sweden entered into a sort of competition with the United States as the symbol of modernity" (Ruth 1986:276). In his essay on "Civil Religion in America," Robert Bellah (1988:115) observes that "a world civil religion," building
(continued...)

Traffic-calming

I turn now from sex to fast cars -- as unlikely a topic for me (having never owned a car) as for my mostly car-free comrades in Stockholm and Uppsala. They lamented the growing use of private cars, on environmental and aesthetic grounds; and they prized public transportation. Those of my associates who had visited the United States often named car traffic as one of that country's least pleasant aspects, although one friend from Lund admitted her enthusiasm for Californian freeways: "I liked driving in LA. Sometimes I had the feeling I was dancing. . . . Swedes do not dance when they drive."

Traffic behavior is sometimes used as a metaphor for civic unraveling, as when an older man recalled the days when no one drove 100 on a 90-kilometer-per-hour road. During the bank bail-out of the early 1990s, a middle-aged worker commented:

on the American model, "has been the eschatological hope of American civil religion from the beginning. To deny such an outcome would be to deny the meaning of America itself."

The high lords get parachute agreements while the blue-collars and the collective have to pay. The lords change titles and continue as before. There is no solidarity at all in society. One sees that even in the traffic. People don't even indicate with the blinker that they are thinking of turning (Lundgren 1993:20).

Golden parachutes and sloppy drivers here index a common egotism and lack of solidarity.

Drivers incarnate -- and become an allegory for -- fundamental questions about human interdependence and human evil. The noted author Lars Gyllensten hinted at this when he included a discussion of driving in his modernized version of the Ten Commandments. In an exegesis of his Fifth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill nor be a party to killing," Gyllensten (1965:226-227) observed that

you are a party to murder [t]o the extent that your infantile need to drive a car as often and as fast as possible prevents the effective restriction of motorists' "rights" by the enforcement of sweeping local speed limits, the

investment of millions in the construction of tolerably safe roads, stricter police control, more severe punishments for careless driving, etc.

Dangerous driving was one of the "examples of murder that go unperceived" (Gyllensten 1965:227).

Gyllensten's example was well-chosen. Social democratic Sweden has long combined technocratic planning with moral fervor in the social steering of behavior. With regard to traffic control, efforts range from rigorous driving exams (that include a drive around cones on simulated ice) to mandatory alcohol testing at roadblocks (Tomasson 1999:505).⁵⁶

Discourse about drivers and ways to regulate them offers a window on conceptions of individual and collective accountability, on dilemmas of norm enforcement (as in the case of speed limits), and on the formation of new social constraints (as with regard to sport-utility vehicles).

Traffic matters also provoke stark questions about individual

⁵⁶ These are checkpoints that Swedish police occasionally set up on weekend nights to intercept intoxicated drivers. Some citizens resent the checkpoints as an interference with their liberty. In response, a mid-nineties poster by the traffic authority presented the photograph and name of a Swedish girl who had been killed by a drunk driver, along with the dates

(continued...)

aggression and ways of restraining it. No wonder, then, that a country with strong taboos on aggression and violence (Sontag 1969:26; Tomasson 1970:279; Daun 1996:78, 125)⁵⁷ should evince a preoccupation with traffic control and traffic safety.

Put differently, one could say that traffic policy is a discourse about many things, not all of which roll on wheels. Traffic regulation is thus a promising arena in which to attempt one of the most difficult analytical tasks of a social poetics: to "treat social organization as rhetoric (although it is certainly much else as well)" (Herzfeld 1997a:141).

To explore the symbolic terrain of traffic in Sweden, I invite you to join me on a road trip. In order to traverse the spatial and temporal geography of twentieth-century Swedish car culture, we will need a versatile vehicle.

of her birth and her death. The text read: "There are worse things to come home to than a checkpoint."

⁵⁷ Political scientist Ulf Bjereld (1998) has demonstrated that there are profound gender differences in Swedes' attitudes about violence. On every issue he investigated -- from "action" films to weapon exports -- women opposed violence significantly more than men did. Interestingly, Bjereld found almost no gender difference in six- to nine-year-old children's perspectives on violence; the gap in attitudes, he believes, emerges later in life.

Perhaps a new Volvo, the car with -- as U.S. advertisements declare -- "enormous confidence in itself" (Volvo 1998).

Our first destination is rural Sweden at the beginning of the century. Here Olle Hagman's (1999) work on Swedish motorism provides a map. Looking out the window, you will see several wealthy city-dwellers who have driven out into the countryside on pleasure excursions. These motorists scare horses, leave gates open, and offend local sensibilities (Hagman 1999). In this late-to-urbanize European society, an initial skepticism toward cars is thus planted.

Driving decades forward, into the 1940s, we witness another development: Sweden's celebrated concern with automotive safety. In 1941, Sweden became the world's first nation to legislate alcohol limits for drivers of motor vehicles (Tomasson 1998:497). The blood alcohol limit was reduced over the years, and in 1990 it was brought down to 0.02 percent, the industrialized world's lowest level (Tomasson 1998:497). That was apparently not low enough for the public, a majority of whom, in a 1988 opinion poll, favored a limit of 0.00 percent (Tomasson 1998:498).

But I have jumped ahead. Let us linger a moment in the late 1940s, when governmental authorities commissioned a

prominent novelist and playwright, Stig Dagerman, to write a didactic story about a car accident. Entitled "To Kill a Child," the narrative begins on "the happy morning of an evil day," a day when "a child will be killed . . . by a happy man." The man is driving with his girlfriend to the harbor for a rowboat excursion, and he wants to get there in a hurry. Meanwhile, a mother discovers that her family is out of sugar, and she sends her child to borrow some lumps of sugar from a neighbor across the street. The collision happens. Later, Dagerman tells us, the man "yells that it was not his fault. But he knows that that is a lie" (Dagerman 1971:73-75).

Dagerman's story implicitly reproaches the driver for his solipsism, his failure to think about others and thus to drive less hastily and more attentively. Such a call for conscientiousness -- like the aforementioned alcohol limits -- pushes individual drivers to live up to common standards of behavior. This is one continuing theme of traffic-safety efforts in Sweden; the other theme is the technical enhancement of roads and cars.

As we're riding in a Volvo, I ought to mention that in 1959, it was a Volvo engineer, Nils Bohlin, who patented the three-point self-adjusting seat belt (Boyer 1994:604; Krebs

1999:1). Later, the new Volvos "met all proposed U.S. safety standards for the 1970s even before they were announced" (Boyer 1994:604-605). Then in 1976, the U.S. Highway Traffic Safety Administration chose the Volvo 240 as "the benchmark for automobile safety in the United States" (Boyer 1994:605).

Continuing our road trip, we notice a great array of safety barriers, lights, signs and other particulars of the driving environment. Most of these amenities are there thanks to Vägverket, the Swedish National Road Administration. Vägverket is responsible for realizing Nollvisionen, literally, "the zero vision." This is the official national goal: a society in which no one is killed or seriously injured in traffic. Included is an intermediate ambition to reduce annual traffic fatalities to 400 in the year 2000 -- a decrease of a few hundred from recent years' levels. While both the proximate and long-term goals of Nollvisionen appear to be out of reach, Sweden is not doing too badly in this arena. The 1998 figures from the European Union's statistical office show Sweden to have had the lowest fatality rate in the EU: only 60 traffic deaths per million inhabitants, compared to 212 in Greece and 243 in Portugal (Brattberg 2000). The 1996 rate of traffic deaths in relation to population was "perhaps the lowest level achieved

by any developed country in the past half century" (Tomasson 1999:498).

If you look out of the car window just now, you will notice the neon green caps of the schoolchildren in the crosswalk. Beginning in the early 1990s, the Stockholm school authority issued these luminescent caps to all children starting their first year of school, to make them more visible to motorists. An involved official, Nils-Gunnar Winberg, says that studies by the school authority "show that 96 percent of the children use the caps on the way to and from school and on group outings" (Metro 1995:4).

Let us pull up at the offices of three institutions -- the Highway Administration, a car company, and a nonprofit association -- to hear about their conceptions of accountability for traffic safety. At Vägverket's head office, Anders Lie, the chief of accident investigations, explains his philosophy. Even if one can often trace the causes of an accident to mistakes by the driver, Lie avows, ultimate responsibility for every individual's death or injury in traffic rests with those in charge of creating the traffic system itself (Löfvenhaft 1999). A crash-safety expert at Saab, Christer Nilsson, similarly emphasizes the supra-personal factors involved in driving. He says: "If the

driver makes a mistake, as happens, the car should be forgiving and help him out of the situation" (Wadendal 1999b). In the same vein, the National Association for the Promotion of Traffic Safety (Nationalföreningen för Trafiksäkerhetens Främjande, or NTF) writes in a press release: "Don't put all the blame on the drivers -- build safer roads" (Nationalföreningen för Trafiksäkerhetens Främjande 1998). The director of that organization comments that commuters "have the right to demand a good traffic environment, but from the authorities' side, people continue to place all the responsibility on us who drive on the roads" (Wadendal 1999a).

These views of collective responsibility echo common ideological chords of the social-democratic welfare state. The assumptions are that people's social context powerfully shapes their choices, that most people try to do their best, and that they should be helped when they fall. Such a vision of interdependence was well articulated in the early 1980s by Prime Minister Olof Palme. Opposing the "new individualism" of his conservative opponents, Palme said that the right wanted people to

accept an ever more scrappy Underground [subway] system, with poor maintenance and declining standards of service. Better still, seek an individual solution to travel problems by taking the car . . . if you have one. What I mean is that a one-sided seeking after private, individual solutions is a retreat, because in our industrialised society no one can create an island, where he, independent of others, can build a secure life. We all of us depend on each other for our material standards, for our future security, for our cultural experiences, for our personal growth (Mosey 1991:140).

It is worth noting Palme's criticism of driving as an unsatisfactory individual solution to a collective problem.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ One odd expression of what some would call "collectivist" thinking was to be found amidst the mountain of red roses -- the traditional symbol of the Social Democratic party -- that accumulated at the site of Palme's assassination. Amidst the flowers, hundreds of people left letters to the fallen leader. The letters were eventually archived, and some of the more poignant ones are reproduced in a handsome volume (continued...)

Such a view was widespread in the 1970s and 1980s, when cars were often seen to symbolize people's efforts "to isolate themselves from the masses" (Anna Gavanas, personal communication, September 1999).

A contrasting view of personal and collective accountability can be found if we drive through Stockholm's silk-stockings Östermalm district to the offices of Timbro, a corporate-funded think tank of a neoliberal, laissez-faire persuasion. The head of Timbro, Anders Linder, writes that "through hard propaganda, politicians and bureaucrats have described motorism as something filthy, in the best case as a necessary, temporary evil" (Linder 1997:2). Timbro sponsored a book assailing the government's nollvisionen goal of zero traffic deaths. Bearing the clever title, "Warning -- life can lead to death!," the book plays on the decades-old

entitled, Kärleksbrev till Olof Palme, "Love letters to Olof Palme" (Haste 1986). One of the letters offers a quaint commingling of a woman's tenderness and a bureaucratically defined conscientiousness. The author writes her ten-digit national identification number (personnummer) after her signature: "I joined the Social Democratic Party mostly because I liked you so enormously much. Christina L., personal i.d. number - " (Haste 1986:70). In the same vein, when thirty-three Dagens Nyheter readers sent me their thoughts on solidarity (in response to an article), one letter arrived from a woman in the north of Sweden who, at the start of her insightful commentary, informed me of her national identification number.

stereotype of a Swedish obsession with safety (see Sontag 1969:34). The author, Mats Ekelund, characterizes Swedes as "safety fundamentalists" whose indiscriminate aversion to risk produces a "stagnating, static society" (Timbro Idag 1999:4).⁵⁹ Instead of what he sees as a system where the Road Authority "takes over responsibility from road-users," Ekelund wants to have "reliance on people's judgment and ability to take care of themselves" (Timbro Idag 1999:4). He thus stands at a considerable philosophical and rhetorical distance both from Olof Palme's paeon to interdependence and from the three abovementioned views of systemic responsibility for traffic accidents.

Proceeding with our road trip, we arrive at certain streets that we cannot pass through, due to protests against bilismen (motorism or, as one might say, the car culture). During the summer of 1999 in Stockholm, teenagers and twenty-somethings staged an unauthorized street festival to oppose bilismen. Calling their organization by the English words "Reclaim the Streets" (some of them said "Reclaim the

⁵⁹ For a discussion of contrasting conceptions of risk, see Thomas Malaby's (1999:142-144) exploration of the "politics of the contingent."

City"),⁶⁰ the participants danced and sung on a main thoroughfare until 250 of them were arrested by 100 sometimes intemperate police officers (Björklund 1999). Protest actions against motorism have a noteworthy if little-known lineage in Swedish activist politics, beginning in the 1970s (Hagman 1999); they often involve small, loosely organized groups belonging to environmental, left, and youth movements.

One such action took place in Gothenburg in 1994, when a group of students briefly blockaded a busy street near their university to protest motorism and the pollution that results. Hagman (1999) notes that the participants called it a kulturkrock, a collision of cultures: the protesters' environmental and humanistic values apparently clashed with those of industrial modernity.

One might observe that both the left-leaning street blockaders and the right-leaning Timbro activists share a distrust of certain powerful institutions, but for opposite reasons. The Timbro director, Anders Linder, feels that state officials regulate motorism to increase their own

⁶⁰ By this choice of name, the organizers marked their kinship with the London activist organization known as "Reclaim the Streets," a group that mixes rave party culture with protests on environmental, anti-car, squatters' rights and anarchist themes (Ghazvinian 2000:23-34).

power. He writes that the "gasoline tax is raised for the sake of money. But also for power. Free mobility is dangerous and suspect." The state's view, as he sees it, is that "people should sit still on the bus and not speak with the driver during the journey" (Linder 1997:2). Linder and his Timbro allies worry about being hemmed in by collective constraints. An immoderate version of this sentiment was expressed by a political candidate of the right-wing populist New Democracy party, who proposed the firing of all parking-meter readers.

A Social Democratic novelist and playwright, Per Olov Enquist (1986:74) presages Linder's suspicions by arguing that Swedish traffic policy aims to "instill in the human being the idea of the supremacy of the ruling and penalizing forces." In Stockholm, he writes, cars are "chased like rats" by a "giant army of meter maids and police," whose organization is "a Kafkaesque superstructure." The "clear ideological intent" of this arrangement is to inculcate the lesson "that the state exists . . . and that the human being is subject to this state."

Concerns about domination also surface on the anti-motorism, pro-regulation, left-oriented side. A leader of the Gothenburg car blockade, Johan, described it as "a

question of the little guy's conditions of life" (Hagman 1999). The protest, he said, aimed to show people's "exposure in relation to the large structures of power," which for him would include corporations as well as state institutions. But in contrast to the Timbro view of excessive social constraints, the Gothenburg demonstration faults the government for intervening too little to limit drivers. In particular, the street on which the blockade took place had five years earlier been declared a "public nuisance" (sanitär olägenhet) by the city's Board of Environmental and Health Protection, on grounds of congestion, air pollution and noise (Hagman 1999). The protest thus pushed government agencies to follow up on their own acknowledgment of the problem. Similarly, the National Association for the Promotion of Traffic Safety presses the police not to neglect their job of enforcing speed limits (many Sweden police officers dislike and avoid traffic-enforcement work [Mortensen 1999]).

Speeding presents a dramatic test-case for collective constraints. Early motorists in both Sweden and America savored the pleasures of high velocities, and speed and freedom were closely intertwined (Löfgren 1999:58-59). The same coupling persists today. Some Swedes see the sacrifice

of speed as a necessary expression of concern for the commonweal, while others defend their fast ways with a tenacity reminiscent of a National Rifle Association member's grip on his gun. The divide was visible after reporter Jacques Wallner (1999) attended a conference of traffic experts, who concluded that a small lowering of speed limits on undivided highways would save many lives. "I am not more law-abiding or better than anyone else," Wallner wrote, "but of course I am willing to follow the traffic-safety authorities' decree if they decide to reduce the speed on the roads I drive on." This was a classic expression both of conventional modesty and of solidarity defined as a commitment to "abiding by the outcome of some process of collective decision-making" (Mason 1998:23). Wallner (1999) went on to note his expectations of fellow drivers, observing that those who are in the habit of leaving the house late would not arrive on time even if there were no speed limits at all. He invited readers to visit Dagens Nyheter's web site to respond to the question, "Are you prepared to reduce speed to save lives?"

"No!," "Absolutely not!," "Definitely not!!!!!" and similar negative answers streamed in by the dozens over the following days, almost all from persons with male names.

There were hardly any affirmative messages. Such web forums have no statistical reliability, of course, but there was a thematic consistency to many of the messages. In a representative comment, "Fredrik W." wrote that "Sweden is a guardianship land [ett förmyndarland]. The state must indeed believe that everyone is incompetent." Respondents resented the imposition of constraints on their behavior, and they considered themselves competent to determine the appropriate speed on all roads. By contrast, a left-leaning friend told me that speeding is demonstrably dangerous, but even if it were not, it would still be offensive because it shows a disrespect for other people and for agreed-upon laws.

Such polarities of opinion are a reminder that people differ as to their "ideal form of community life" (Douglas 1996:42). People may not know what they like, Mary Douglas writes, but they generally "know what they do not like" (Douglas 1996:45). In the four-part typology that Douglas offers, the speed-seeking males might be counted as competitive individualists, while their solidaristic opponents could be classed as builders of an egalitarian enclave (Douglas 1996:42-43; her two remaining categories are backwater isolates and conservative hierarchists).

One might expect to find similar lines of contest in the emerging debate over sport-utility vehicles (SUVs; in Swedish, terrängbilar, Jeepar, stadsjeepar, sportbilar, and minibussar). After watching test collisions between a mighty Landrover Freelander and a comparatively diminutive Saab 9000, the National Association for the Promotion of Traffic Safety sought to publicize the SUV's built-in "aggressiveness against other vehicles" (Nationalföreningen för Trafiksäkerhetens Främjande 1999). Such oversized cars are today far less common in Sweden than in America, but Swedish automobile sales have historically tended to follow after U.S. patterns.

Dystopian examples from America were useful to a member of the National Road Administration's safety council, Per Kågeson (2000). In a recent debate article entitled, "The jeeps must be totally prohibited," he cited American accident statistics showing that, in a side-impact collision, occupants are six times more likely to be killed if hit by a SUV than if hit by a car of the same size as their own. Such hazards have led to a vehicular arms race in the United States, where "more and more families get SUVs so as better to protect their children against collisions with such vehicles" (Kågeson 2000). Kågeson finds the Swedish

situation to be similarly senseless because SUVs are purchased mainly by wealthy people in central Stockholm, for reasons of fashion. The spectacular advertisements showing off-road exploits simply invite law-breaking, because it is illegal to drive off-road in Sweden, even on one's own property (Kågeson 2000).

Sport-utility vehicles present a vivid case of behavior that is "smart for one, dumb for all," again to use Robert Frank's (1999:146) encapsulation. A SUV benefits its occupants in status and sometimes in safety, but it puts other motorists at risk and pollutes the environment. The pointless positional competition (for status and for relative safety) that fuels SUV purchases could be stopped by a collective prohibition. But if legislators fail to act, as Kågeson recognizes, "the moment can be lost" and everyone will be forced, like American parents, to participate for their own protection in the vehicular arms race.

Scandinavian Social Democratic governments have often succeeded in deflating positional competitions of this sort - - competitions where no one wins, but all must compete to defend themselves against similar moves made by their neighbors (Milner 1994:69-71). The difficulty in this case is that the Swedish parliament no longer has the authority to

forbid SUVs, due to Sweden's membership in the European Union. An EU-wide consensus on the matter would likely be blocked by motorists and car-makers from the nation of the no-speed-limit autobahn. One recourse would be to use taxes and fees to limit SUVs within Sweden, but such an approach would face EU legal challenges. This regulatory predicament serves as a reminder of the increasing difficulty of implementing collective constraints on a national basis in a supra-nationalizing Europe. Failing such constraints, the most aggressive vehicles will rule the roads.

One of the delights of driving is "the pleasure of forcing others to get out of your way," as the Economist (1999b:31) observes (in a paraphrase of Toad in Kenneth Grahame's tale, The Wind in the Willows). This is an anti-social attitude, if viewed in the light of Sweden's robust social constraints on self-assertion, let alone aggression. The collective curtailment of such solipsistic pleasures -- the pressure on people to recognize their duties to others -- is an indispensable ingredient of a solidaristic society. I remember once attempting to traverse a major Stockholm motorway, at a crosswalk, together with my Swedish friend Marie. When finally a car stopped to let us cross, I waved

gratefully. "Don't do that," Marie upbraided me, "it's his duty to stop."

The price of utopia

For social values "to be coercive," Clifford Geertz (1973:131) observes, they need to have "an appearance of objectivity"; they must not be seen as mere "subjective human preferences." Certain Swedish conceptions of collective life perhaps achieved such authority during the postwar heyday of the general-welfare state, when the economy boomed, Swedish social accomplishments were celebrated abroad, and an organized working class spoke confidently "as the universal class for solidarity much as the bourgeoisie claimed to do in its day for merit against status" (Baldwin 1990:25). During her Swedish sojourn in 1969, Sontag (1969:35) found that "what's most striking to an American here is the ubiquity and immense respectability of left-liberal ideas."⁶¹ Yet even at the apex of Social Democratic hegemony, there was significant

⁶¹ I was reminded of Sontag's comment about an earlier age when I stayed at the Church of Sweden's retreat center in Rättvik. The guest room was equipped with three books: a bible, a psalmbook, and Julius Nyerere's Socialism in Tanzania, in an edition published in Uppsala in 1969.

and well-organized conservative opposition (see Ljunggren 1992).

Right-of-center challenges blossomed during the 1980s and 1990s, as noted in Chapters 1 and 2. In the resulting debates, leftist beliefs enjoyed little of the appearance of naturalness and objectivity of which Geertz writes. Instead, they were open to critical debate and to international comparison -- not least with a Thatcherized Britain and a Reaganized America. Why, for example, should Swedish CEOs not possess the same platinum parachutes as their American counterparts?

Collective constraints of the sort examined in this chapter have been key objects of contestation. Most often, the left has supported, and the right has opposed, the regulations in question. The Conservative Party (Moderaterna), for example, takes no interest in limiting the growing gap between worker and executive pay levels, and it has supported raising the speed limits on the roads. As mentioned earlier, a branch of the party's youth section recently called for the complete legalization of prostitution.

More generally, opposition to collective constraints forms one of the two main rhetorical strategies of right-of-

center critics in Sweden. (The other strategy is to portray all political choices as mere conformity to the imperatives of "the market.") The left's ideal of solidarity contains both a voluntaristic element (attentiveness to the needs of others) and a compulsory element (social pressures and laws, including taxation). Attacking the first element opens one to charges of selfishness; doing so suggests a lack of concern for asthmatic schoolchildren, unemployed immigrants, bed-ridden senior citizens, or others who come into the sympathetic spotlights of social movements and the media. Attacking the second element of solidarity -- collective constraints -- avoids such risks and can be done in the name of freedom. Moreover, the left lacks a confident philosophical language by means of which to respond to such attacks.

The simplest condemnation of "a Sweden of restrictions" (Enquist 1986:67) comes ready-made in the invocation of jantelagen, the Jante Law. This is an "ironic code for Nordic behavior" which reflects "all the dark sides of small-scale societies insisting on equity: envy, jealousy, and extreme degrees of social control" (Dahl 1986:108). The Jante Law was conceived by the Danish-Norwegian author Aksel Sandemose in his 1933 novel, A Refugee Crosses His Tracks.

Ten commandments comprise it, including "Thou shalt not fancy thyself better than we" and "Thou shalt not believe thou amountest to anything" (Buckser 1996:75). Sandemose's fictive "Jante" is patterned on the insular Danish town of his boyhood. Anthropologist Andrew Buckser (1996:75) studied this region of Denmark (Mors) and found a milder form of the ethos that Sandemose describes. Residents "dislike self-importance and the expression of extravagant ambitions"; they praise others, but "the individual who offers or implies such praise of himself invites scathing ridicule."

In quotidian conversation in Sweden, reference to the Jante Law usually constitutes a claim that individuality or achievement has been suppressed on grounds of equality. "In Sweden no one is allowed to boast," a business consultant explains ruefully; "we live in the land of moderation where the Jante Law rules" (Arhén 1999). Not infrequently, the Jante Law is invoked by those wishing to explain their failure to achieve a promotion or a high-status position. A post-doc at the University of Lund explained to me that he would have been given a coveted faculty position, but his work was too innovative for the reigning Jante Law of his department. In aiding his self-justification, the Jante Law formed part of what Herzfeld (1992:7) has called a "secular

theodicy," a conventionalized "social means of coping with disappointment."

"Royal Swedish envy" (den kungliga svenska avundsjukan), a conceptual sibling of the Jante Law, is a cliché used to suggest that Swedes are characteristically envious. The vice is called "royal" in the sense of being "officially acknowledged" (Arnstberg 1993:24). The extent to which envy forms part of a national self-stereotype was documented in a 1985 study by the polling organization SIFO. Asked to choose three "attributes that describe Swedes" from a list of thirty possibilities, respondents selected "envious" more often than any of the other adjectives (Daun 1996:186; Arnstberg 1993:27). It is not clear whether individuals had themselves or their compatriots in mind when making their choices, but the survey suggests that the cliché is widespread, not that envy is a common emotion.

An attitude of envy can serve to enforce the Jante Law. Historian David Gaunt (1985:103) describes a pair of sawmill workers who, during the 1890s, purchased an expensive overcoat together but did not dare to wear it for several years. Meanwhile, moneyed women in the south Swedish countryside did not put on their fashionable hats until they had boarded the train to the city of Malmö (Gaunt 1985:103).

How strong are present-day social pressures against self-foregrounding or boastful behavior? Is there a Jante Law? "There is no such thing [as the Jante Law] in practice," a writer at the left-leaning magazine Ordfront told me, "but it would be a good thing if there were." A certain degree of Jante sensibility would restrain conspicuous consumption, he felt. It has done so in the past, as Gaunt (1985:103) explains: "the fear of rousing the envy of others has during long periods hindered a completely selfish use of money." Gaunt laments that today "we see only the negative sides [of royal Swedish envy]. 'Jante law,' everyone shouts." Another commentator notices a rising use of lyx (luxury) as a prefix -- "luxury-tarts, luxury-bordellos and even luxury-whores" -- in the media's enthusiastic depictions of the pleasures and predations of the well-situated (Magnusson 1995:2). The notion of luxury, she feels, "presumes that we have a common understanding of right and wrong Luxury shall immediately mobilize envy and the Jante Law's suspiciousness." Daun (1996:212) speculates that growing income differentials "will in the end bring about the weakening of the famous Swedish envy in that gaps between people will be considered part of the natural order: it is between equals that envy flourishes."

One may read the collective constraints of the Jante Law as a sort of consumption tax on the enjoyment of dominant status. As Frank (1999:122-145) demonstrates, relative position powerfully affects a person's life chances, happiness, and health. Persons of low rank have significantly worse morbidity and mortality records than their superiors, even when the absolute wealth of the group as a whole is high and rising (Frank 1999:144). Relative position is what matters, and those at the bottom pay with body and soul.⁶² Perhaps recognizing this, even the right-of-center Christian Democrats would prefer, as they put it in a 1998 election slogan, "a society where the strong do not always win" (Heintz 1998).

From this perspective, it is possible to appreciate the cultural logic of the Jante sensibility. Like gossip more generally (and often by means of gossip⁶³), this collective

⁶² "The problem of economic distribution," Elaine Scarry (1985:263) argues, "is the problem of distributing the power of artifacts to remake sentience. To summarize this . . . as the problem of 'the haves and the have-nots' is inadequate to express its concussiveness unless it is understood that what is had and had not is the human body."

⁶³ James Scott (1990:142-143) notes that "most gossip is a discourse about social rules that have been violated." Gossip both presumes and serves to reinforce "an accepted
(continued...)

constraint imposes costs on those who demand one or another form of dominance. Executives may have their golden parachutes, but at the price of social opprobrium in the media; the affluent may drive their road-ruling mega-cars, but at the risk of becoming the target of regulators who will impose high fees; a visiting anthropologist may boast about his relative cleverness, but not without making himself an object of scorn. Superior status may exist, but it ought not be flaunted. The correct approach is one of self-backgrounding, as in the case of Ingvar Carlsson discussed at the outset of this chapter. It is the attitude of Buckser's (1996:75) rural Danish informants: "Those who find themselves in the public eye affect a slight embarrassment, and imply by their tone that their current visibility stems from chance, not from any special qualities they possess."

Even the new law on prostitution may be interpreted in this light, as an imposition of costs on those who seek dominance. As I mentioned previously, the government's official comment on the prostitution bill emphasized the prostitute's status as "the weaker party." The law

normative standard from which degrees of deviation may be estimated."

criminalizes only the buyer of sexual services, for it is he who commits an act of arrogation.

Violations of the Jante Law are above all violations of human equality -- "Thou shalt not believe thou art greater than we" (Buckser 1996:75). They reveal something about how equality is conceived and maintained. In her study of "egalitarian individualism" in Norway, Marianne Gullestad (1992:192) notices "a strong emphasis on equality defined as sameness." People seek to "fit in with" those like themselves and are hesitant when faced with "unwanted differences." Gullestad asks which differences matter, and she finds that personal approachability is pivotal for Norwegians: "A person defines him/herself as equal to another by being accessible" (Gullestad 1992:193).

In the case of a Sweden molded by decades of Social Democratic leadership, and leavened even today by leftist energies, what are the differences that most offend against equality? I have tried to show in this chapter that the force of social pressure and law falls heavily on those who seek dominant status, those who wish to lord it over others. Such ambitions are hard for any society to constrain.

"People are not . . . terribly anxious to be equal," James Baldwin (1985:371) once wrote, "but they love the idea of being superior."

Chapter 4. "Euroclass" Sweden and Its Dissenters

The discourse of the new market economics appears irresistible, as it washes over and overwhelms the languages of collectivism, humanism, egalitarian Christianity and the ethical discourses of the professions.

- Raman Selden (1991:58)

The crucial question for countries in the twenty-first century, Robert Heilbroner believes, is where they will be located along the spectrum of possible capitalisms (Heilbroner 1993:315). "The contest between capitalism and socialism is over: capitalism has won," but there are great differences between, for example, Scandinavian, U.S. and Brazilian forms of capitalism (Heilbroner 1989:98; 1997:19). Sweden lies at one end of the spectrum, and in the previous chapter we observed some of the social expectations and constraints that tame Sweden's capitalist society: verbal flaying of highly remunerated executives, protests against

the commodification of women's bodies, and checks on aggressive drivers. Such practices have helped create in Sweden what may be the world's gentlest variant of capitalism.

The neoliberal hurricane of the post-Cold-War years blows powerfully in the opposite direction, away from the taming of the market. As Pierre Bourdieu suggests, neoliberalism is a movement "aimed at putting into question all the collective structures capable of obstructing the logic of the pure market" (Bourdieu 1998:96).⁶⁴ Bourdieu offers a trenchant analysis of how the "neo-liberal utopia" generates individual insecurity and a "moral Darwinism which, with the cult of the 'winner,' establishes the struggle of all against all and cynicism as the norm of all practices" (Bourdieu 1998:102).

The neoliberal utopia is a far cry from the Sweden where naiveté may be valorized (as noted in Chapter 2), rivalries

⁶⁴ Such structures include "the nation-state, whose room for manoeuvre is steadily shrinking; work groups, with for example the individualization of salaries and careers on the basis of individual performance and the consequent atomization of workers; collectives defending workers' rights -- unions, societies and cooperatives; even the family" (Bourdieu 1998:96).

repressed and collective institutions cherished.

Neoliberalism thus appears as an undoing of Swedishness, a "destructive action" (Bourdieu 1998:96). No surprise, then, to hear the leader of the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (Landsorganisationen) describe the market-loving government of Prime Minister Carl Bildt as "unSwedish" (Pred 1995:199).⁶⁵ The latter part of this chapter will explore such portrayals of a land beleaguered by "unSwedish" predatory forces from within and without.

What were the material manifestations of the gradual neoliberalization of Sweden during the 1990s? A sampling of headlines from major Swedish newspapers suggests the direction of change:

"Sweden has become a tax paradise" (Askman 1995).

"Longest life in the affluent suburbs" (Lisinski 1995).

⁶⁵ For a concise, scholarly account of the policy changes introduced by the Bildt regime, see Milner 1994:161-165.

"New [private] welfare insurance for 30 billion -- will become as large a market as today's life insurance" (Wrede 1996).

"Are you profitable, little friend?" (Keller 1996).

"The market's road to power: The Swedish model's death" (Bratt 1997).

"The homeless can get to live in barracks" (Olsson 1998).

"Bag people -- the only ones who are protesting" (Moberg 1998).

"Mother Teresa's nuns want to open a soup kitchen and night shelter in Stockholm" (Svenska Dagbladet 1998).

"The police want to prohibit begging" (Annerud 1999).

"The handicapped risk being deported" (Larsson 1999) .

"Worse for children during the 1990s" (Forslund 1999) .

"Wage differences become ever greater" (Reichwald 1999) .

"Wage differences back to the level of the 1950s" (Sekund 1999) .

"The ten largest [shareholders] own nearly half the stock exchange" (Giertta 1999) .

"The market gives the new finance minister an unsatisfactory grade" (Dagens SverigeNytt 1999b) .

"Who thinks of the young and poor?" (Alton 1999) .

"Ever more often, the young don't give a damn about [labor] unions" (Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå 2000) .

"Public expenditures now at the lowest level"

(Schück 2000) .

"One of every five libraries has been shut down

since 1998" (Dagens SverigeNytt 2000) .

"[New] skyscraper only for the rich" (Westmar

2000) .

"Health care has become a question of social class"

(Mellin 2000) .

"Good times only for some people" (Pettersson

2000) .

These newspaper headlines describe a societal transformation familiar to the inhabitants of other welfare states in recent years: the "ever deepening wealth-and-income gaps" that Zygmunt Bauman (1999b:175) claims the global economy is producing "inside every single society."

In the early 1990s, Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) introduced on its airplanes an upgraded luxury-seating section, called "Euroclass." The name hinted at three

contemporary transitions in Sweden: 1) the re-emergence of a class society, with wide gaps in wealth and life possibilities; 2) the move toward membership in the European Union; and 3) the rise of the business executive as a lionized social type, to whom the rest of the society should cater. It was in honor of SAS's well-named sub-brand that I chose to christen the newly neoliberalized society "Euroclass Sweden" (Palmer 1995, 1996a).⁶⁶

The beleaguered "People's Home"

The Sweden that was being dismantled in the 1990s also had a name: folkhemmet, the People's Home. This metaphor originally was used by Social Democratic Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson to evoke a vision of society-wide solidarity. In a famous debate in the lower house of the Swedish parliament in 1935, Hansson declared:

In the good home, equality, consideration,
cooperation and helpfulness prevail. Applied to

⁶⁶ SAS retired the Euroclass sub-brand in 1998, but the name survives in a recently inaugurated Lund University research project, "Between the Hansa and the Euroclass."

the great people's and citizens' home, this would mean the breakdown of all social and economic barriers, which now divide citizens into privileged and neglected, into dominating and dependent, into rich and poor, propertied and pauperized, plunderers and plundered (Hansson and Pettersson 1992:76) .

According to historian Yvonne Hirdman, folkhemmet "can -- and should -- certainly be described as a metaphor for the entire social democratic structure. It was an image of society as a great community, where solidarity and helpfulness would reign" (Freiburg 1993:227). Hansson succeeded in using the cohesion of the familial household as an image for the kind of societal unity that the Social Democrats hoped to build.

The grand metaphor of folkhemmet survived more than six decades. To American ears, the People's Home is an ideological sibling of Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal." Yet in magnitude of mythical potency, the metaphor of the People's Home may have been more important to Swedes than the New Deal was to Americans. But not anymore: today the expression folkhemmet often calls forth irony. When I used the term in a presentation at the Department of Social

Anthropology in Stockholm, several young scholars present were at pains to point out that the image had little emotional resonance for them, that their timid school-teachers had skipped over the People's Home in history lessons, and that perhaps the only persons still enamored of the People's Home were foreign observers of Sweden like myself.

The last rites of this grand image were performed, inadvertently, on a Swedish television show in 1999. The host, Gunnel Werner, interviewed various passers-by -- all of them young adults -- on a city street. "What is the People's Home?" was her question. None of them knew. "I am rather new here in town," one responded, "I can't find things so well." Another said, "The People's Home? I don't know where that's located." They all thought that it must be a municipal institution, perhaps a nursing home, and they regretted that they were unable to give directions to it (Lindqvist 1999).

Neoliberalizing Stockholm: a downtown walking tour

During my early visits to Sweden, one of Stockholm's busiest shopping streets became an important mental landmark

in my essentialist cartography. The road is called Drottninggatan ("Queen Street"), and it reminded me that solidaristic values were at the very heart of Swedish society (or so I imagined). Let me depict a walk down Drottninggatan in 1991 and then offer some later reflections.

At the southern terminus of the street, we find the Foreign Ministry, home base to a diplomatic corps renowned for international peacemaking initiatives. Through its good offices I had the opportunity to meet Daniel Ortega, the Nicaraguan revolutionary leader, at a public forum in his honor hosted by the then prime minister Ingvar Carlsson.⁶⁷

Walking a few blocks north on this pedestrians-only avenue, we come to Kulturhuset, "the house of culture." This vast Swedish precursor to the Parisian Centre Pompidou was built in the 1960s with the explicit aim of giving the city a non-commercial symbolic hub. It was a temporary home to the Swedish Parliament in the 1970s. Here anyone who wishes may fashion vases out of clay, use a library well-stocked with Swedish and foreign-language periodicals, view art shows or attend inexpensive theater productions. Content ranges from

⁶⁷ Visitors to Managua may encounter another reminder of Swedish-Nicaraguan friendship: that city's Olof Palme Convention Center.

the civic-minded -- I remember an exhibition featuring the best of bicycle-helmet technology -- to the whimsical and the avant-garde.

Continuing north on Drottninggatan, we pass dozens of African, Eastern European and Middle Eastern street peddlers, a reminder that we are in the land of Western Europe's most liberal asylum and immigration policies. After crossing Olof Palmes Gata, the street named after the fallen hero, we can see Folkets Hus, "the people's house" (not to be confused with folkhemmet, the People's Home). This is a public-spirited convention center that hosts meetings on such themes as women's rights, child labor, world hunger, and occupational health and safety. Further up the street is Handelsfront ("trade front"), a nonprofit shop peddling such non-exploitative products as coffee made by peasant cooperatives in Nicaragua, as well as clothing and accessories from the planet's poorest lands. Nearby is Röda Rummet ("the red room"), a left-wing new-and-used bookstore, and Animalen ("animal center"), an animal-rights bookstore and vegan café. Finally, near Drottninggatan's northern end, we come to a progressive Latin American bookstore, and there, in the window, hangs a large photograph of a smiling Olof Palme greeting Fidel Castro.

My search for a solidaristic Sweden should have ended there on Drottninggatan in 1991, amidst a cornucopia of alternative shops popular enough to survive the rents of this central business district. But let us return to Drottninggatan four years later in 1995. What details did we miss on our first walk? And what has changed during the years of Sweden's first right-dominated parliament (1991-1994) and concomitant recession?

We notice first that most Stockholmers consider the glass-and-steel buildings around Kulturhuset to be ugly monstrosities that monumentalize the grandiose ambitions of a 1960s Social-Democratic elite. Some of these structures are home to massive department stores and banks -- the real heart of this district. On the day we visit, we see women in front of Kulturhuset scrubbing the steps with toothbrushes. This is a theatrical protest against massive cutbacks in the social-services sector, most of whose workers are women. A number of bored-looking Ethiopian men stand nearby. The peddlers are still around, but they lack permits and look around nervously for police.

Continuing up Drottninggatan, we pass the Hennes & Mauritz women's clothing store, a chain whose omnipresent undergarment advertisements frequently provoke feminist

protests. Nearby is a new upscale gold-and-chrome-plated shopping mall called Adam & Eva. A little way past Folkets Hus, on a side street, a Russian immigrant has opened up a shop purveying hard-core pornographic videos. Handelsfront, Röda Rummet and Animalen have all gone out of business, their former spaces now occupied by chain stores and pricey clothing boutiques. No new alternative stores have opened. The Latin American shop survives, though its proprietor has taken down the photo of Palme and Castro. Directly across the street, in a former dance hall, predominantly foreign businessmen watch a newly opened strip-tease show for an admission price of 500 kronor (then about \$75), not including drinks.

Our second walk creates a less confident cartography of humanistic values. On the cultural battlefield of Drottninggatan, the left-leaning establishments have been forced into retreat by money, people and ideas that traverse a much wider map.

A peculiar emissary

"The great advantage," John Kenneth Galbraith once said, "of being in the same world as the United States is that it

reveals to other countries the pleasures and horrors that will afflict them only a few years hence" (Reisman 1982:155). My Swedish hosts had experienced or seen movies of the pleasures (notably, in their eyes, the dynamism and diversity of New York) and the horrors (especially gun violence and homelessness).⁶⁸ Those who had not yet visited "capitalism's promised land" (Danielsson 1985:360) often had the more dystopian visions of the U.S., sometimes leaning too far in the direction of social critic Sven Lindqvist's (1992:B2) portrait of a "night-watchman's state" on the American model. "In the end," Lindqvist writes, "every homeowner stands on his own roof with his own machine gun and shoots around himself to protect his own property and his own life, while the city burns. The night is long in the night-watchman's state."

How to prevent Sweden from becoming more like America was a common preoccupation of my interlocutors. For example, Rikard Sollman, a social worker serving addicts and homeless

⁶⁸ After a Latin American immigrant shot and killed a few people outside a posh Stockholm discotheque, concerned citizens left flowers, letters and signs at the site (a plaza called Stureplan). One of the signs said, in Swedish, "Stockholm is not New York" -- apparently a plea not to let gun murders become as normal in Stockholm as they are in New York.

people at the City Mission (Stadsmissionen), told me in answer to a question about cutbacks in Swedish general-welfare programs: "I would gladly pay still more in taxes, rather than that the situation should be changed, like, to what it is in the USA for example -- which I feel is terrible!" ("Yes, indeed it is," was the reply, caught on the tape, of the none-too-objective ethnographer.)

If the United States was one fabled collectivity that I stood for in the eyes of my Swedish hosts, Harvard -- "the Ellis Island of American capitalism"⁶⁹ -- was another. In public forums, conservative commentators sometimes made reference to Harvard as the high-voltage heaven that Swedes would enjoy if only they were willing to "invest more in elites" (Ahlander 2000). When the twelve-year-old son of the neoliberal former finance minister was asked what dreams he had for his future, his instant answer was "Harvard!" (Ahlander 2000). With a wilder imagination, a right-leaning Social Democratic economist, Bo Södersten (1995:A4), wrote:

⁶⁹ This metaphor was minted by my teacher Robert Coles, the James Agee Professor of Social Ethics at Harvard.

The total cost for a one-year place in the Swedish labor-market education [program for the unemployed] is of the same order of magnitude as the cost of studying for a year at Harvard. The difference is only that the Harvard student knows that he has acquired an education that makes him eminently able to compete on the world's toughest labor market and that leads to his coming to be immune to unemployment for the rest of his life . . .

What the noted economist seems to misunderstand is that if Harvard each year graduates bearers of considerable social capital, that outcome ensues in large part because the university admits predominantly those who are already favored and successful. Harvard's prestige depends upon its ability to reject tens of thousands of applicants each year, and a Harvard that was open to all the unemployed would have about as much prestige -- and give its graduates about as much of a competitive edge -- as a Swedish labor-market preparation program.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ The historian Stephanie Coontz reflects on a somewhat comparable dilemma of exclusivity versus universality: "If
(continued...)

It was the exclusivity of Harvard that most disturbed my friends Pelle Strindlund (mentioned previously) and Jens Holm (a local leader in the youth section of the Left Party). Over our frequent meals together, they would often ask me not only what Harvard was like but why I was there. How did it feel, they wondered, to work for an institution that catered, at enormous expense, to some of the planet's most privileged young people? What was a devoted egalitarian (as they considered me to be) doing at a place like that? These were challenging questions, because I had not realized the extent to which I was an ambassador for precisely the winner-take-all ideology against which my hosts struggled to protect Sweden.

Jens, Pelle, and I, together with common friends, celebrated New Year's Eve at the moment of Sweden's entry into the European Union (January 1st, 1995). On an apartment balcony overlooking Uppsala, we watched the bursts of colored splendor that appeared here and there above the city as

you privatize childcare, the profit-making kids will get creamed off. There are kids who will generate a profit: They're low cost; they don't have special needs. It's just like the insurance industry. If you don't require companies to cover everyone, they will only cover the totally healthy ones. Everyone else gets left behind and discarded in the trash" (Pollock 1998:32).

revelers set off fireworks. But the explosions became an allegory of military conquest: with each blast, one of us would jokingly announce which public institution had been bombed by EU forces. ". . . There goes the communal music school. . . . That was the public library on Svartbäcksgatan" Unease at the official moment of Sweden's colonization by the EU (as some of those present saw it) was dispelled with humor.

Not all reactions to perceived neoliberal takeover are so lighthearted, whether within or beyond Sweden's borders. Sometimes the stakes seem serious, as they did for Åsa Geivall in a situation that she recounted for me. Åsa had just returned from the Philippines, where she had been part of a Swedish-Filipino "friendship project" (kamratprojekt) organized by the Swedish Church. The project brought together a team of Filipinos and Swedes who worked together, in both countries, to analyze societal shortcomings and advocate for change. Here is how Åsa described a reflective moment outside Manila, when she came across the beginnings of a new shopping center for the affluent. She considered this

exclusive development to be harmful to the interests of the poor as well as ecologically damaging:⁷¹

It was a day when I went [to town] myself, I was going only a little way, and I looked up toward a mountain where there were bulldozers at work devastating the forest and the mountain more and more to build a shopping center there. And then I felt so strongly, "I don't want this! I don't have the strength for all these injustices any longer!" Oh, I just wanted to cry and go away from there.

Here Åsa conveys her sense of how wrong the development is, and how she ought to have the strength to oppose it. As a result of her experiences abroad, she undertook a speaking tour about the Philippines at schools and churches across

⁷¹ It is worth noting the way in which Åsa connects environmental and humanitarian concerns. For her, they appear to form a seamless web of moral significance. This brings to mind Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm's (1994:31) discussion of the "biocentric" ethic that appears to be widespread among Swedes. Such an ethic, he suggests, may be rooted in "the idea that everything is interrelated, that the world is an intricate web of life and that all things ultimately depend on a delicate balance which stands in danger of being disrupted by human beings."

Sweden; she co-edited an innovative newsletter of internationalist reflection, called Zebra; and she served as treasurer of the Swedish-Filipino Association, an advocacy group based in Stockholm's Solidarity House (Solidaritetshuset). Åsa is someone who, as William James (1985:298) once put it, understands that "there is an element of real wrongness in this world, which is neither to be ignored nor evaded, but which must be squarely met and overcome by an appeal to the soul's heroic resources, and neutralized and cleansed away by suffering."

Upon Åsa's return home, she came to feel that there were as many wrongs in Sweden as in the Philippines. "A human life is not valued so highly" in Sweden, she told me, and people joke about others in a manner that can be "terribly ironic, sarcastic, harsh." Nor did she feel welcomed home by a Stockholm increasingly divided between yuppies and the unemployed: "I don't feel like a human being in Sweden," she quipped, "I feel like an economic problem." Åsa noted that her work in the Philippines had made her an expert in the two subjects least in demand by the market: Christianity and communism.

"The Swedish Folkhem ist tot"

An article in Dagens Nyheter tells the story of some young Swedes who won coveted positions in European Union bureaucracies. Most of these young professionals played by the rules and entered an open, state-run competition for the jobs. A few, however, circumvented the application process and got positions through personal contacts in Europe.

A woman in this latter group, Marie, explains her end run around the established procedures: "As a Swede, one wants things to go according to the rules, to be just. But this is just in another way." Her claim of justice seems to rest on the idea that she is shrewd enough to handle the cynical corridors of Brussels. Marie and her fellow rule-benders, the article notes, "are in agreement that this is a rather un-Swedish way to act, un-Swedish but necessary on the Continent" (Hedström 1994:1).

What is out there, somewhere south of Malmö and the southern coast, that makes it "necessary" for a Swede to act in an "un-Swedish way"? Marie's story relies upon a popular Swedish dichotomy between "the good Swedish society and the evil world outside," to borrow Anders Jeffner's (1988:43) terms. The passage of a shrewd and ambitious young Swede

from the land of fair play to the evil world outside raises little concern; Dagens Nyheter's journalist gives Marie a favorable hearing.

More threatening is the evil world's arrival in "the good Swedish society." Swedes share "a sense of common vulnerability in the face of external forces," political scientist Henry Milner (1989:18) suggested back in 1989. The years since then have brought many bitter reminders of that vulnerability. It has been a period of socioeconomic metamorphosis: one need only remember the corporate downsizing and massive flight of industrial jobs that led to unprecedented levels of unemployment; the bouts of anti-immigrant right-wing populism; the weakening of labor unions; the successful efforts by big business to undermine long-established collective bargaining procedures; the costly currency crisis brought on by Swedish and foreign speculators;⁷² the brash young prime minister who espoused many of the neoliberal economic policies of England and America; the tax cuts that aided the wealthy and fueled civic budget deficits; the widening wage differences between the

⁷² Gustav Peebles (1997) offers a rich account of the currency crisis as seen through the self-representations of the key players.

best- and worst-paid; and the gradual but significant retrenchment of social welfare, health-care and educational institutions.

If you ask a Swede what has happened -- if you ask what accounts for the wrenching changes of recent years -- if you ask what it is that compels Marie and others to act in "un-Swedish" ways -- you are likely to hear something about economics, markets, money. It is in the language of economics that Swedish political contests are increasingly fought: most central is a competition to name, classify and evaluate the ongoing economic transformation. Is Sweden abandoning its Social-Democratic sclerosis and retooling for a future of entrepreneurship and affluence, as many on the right assert? Or are the changes better described as the senseless destruction of an egalitarian society by Swedish and international elites intent on cheaper labor and higher profits, as many on the left suggest? At the heart of this interpretive struggle is the matter of how to make sense of the global market (see Miller 1997:9-10): What is its nature? What is it doing to Sweden?

Yet it is hard for social activists to talk to the broader public about the global market, a protean beast whose quick-moving limbs elude perception. Far simpler for the

politically engaged is to focus on the European Union, as a symbol or synecdoche for the global market. For most left-leaning Swedes, EU membership represents a national move to the right, forever locking a once-progressive Sweden into the conservative monetarist requirements of the Maastricht Treaty.⁷³ This move is applauded by Swedes on the right, who often frame membership as an inescapable act of realism against the left's insupportably expensive general-welfare idealism. For both sides, however, the EU serves as a symbol of the mighty economic forces that Sweden must obey or resist.

It is worth noting that the terms "left" and "right" have relevance for discussions of EU support. In the Swedish Left Party, an overwhelming majority of members opposed EU membership in the 1994 referendum. The reverse was true on the other side of the party spectrum among Moderate (i.e.

⁷³ The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 transmuted the European Community (EC) into the European Union (EU). The treaty detailed the economic policies that all member nations would have to follow in order to bring about an eventual convergence of their economies in an Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Three policies were emphasized: fighting inflation, minimizing government budget deficits, and avoiding currency devaluations.

right) partisans, with the proportions for the six other political parties lining up between these two extremes.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, what unites those on the left (including members of the Left Party, the much larger Social Democratic Labor Party, and the small Green Party) is a set of broadly shared goals: sustaining universal health and welfare programs, protecting democracy from the influence of monied interests, opposing the growing differential between rich and poor, preserving the natural environment from damage by industry and consumers, and maintaining the quality of collective life in everything from public transit to public television. The shift to an increasingly market-dominated society -- often symbolized by EU membership -- is seen as imperiling these goals.

An unusual obituary notice appeared in the Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet on the 14th of June, 1992. The death announcement had been placed by persons opposing Swedish entry into the European Union. Beneath a large Christian cross, the notice reads: "Our beloved People's Home . . . has quietly passed away and is mourned by relatives, friends and grandchildren." The obituary goes on to quote Sweden's minister for European Union affairs. "The Swedish Folkhem

ist tot" ("the Swedish People's Home is dead"), he is said to have declared.

The fictive Swedish EU minister's linguistic confusion -- his merging of English, Swedish (Folkhem) and German (ist tot) -- seems to suggest that EU membership would result in a dissolution of Swedish national integrity. Notice, moreover, which languages are used. Many Swedes find irritating the ever-increasing proportions of English words and brand names in advertisements, media and market spaces. They regret that McDonald's, Coca-Cola and their mostly "American" siblings have become ubiquitous. And the minister's third language -- German -- bears hints of arrogance for many Swedes, who may have forgotten the Third Reich but who fret over the frequency with which rich Germans buy choice Swedish summer homes, or the fact that Sweden's interest rates appear to be set in Frankfurt.

This satirical obituary was one of the innumerable creative expressions of opposition to EU membership that I observed in the early and mid-1990s. These imaginative public dramatizations ranged from street theater to songs to poster art. Through such efforts, activists and intellectuals promulgated and performed their social analysis, often with a grim humor (see Cohen-Cruz 1998).

They engaged in the "work of establishing public meanings," as Sally Falk Moore (1993:2) calls it. "In each instance" -- to quote Moore (1993:5) again -- "while local political moralizing is in focus, the blurry image of a larger world is in the background." Public dramatizers create local scenes that make reference to a wider symbolic universe. The examples to which I now turn portray stereotypical high-capitalist characters who assail Swedish general-welfare institutions.

Some of these characters are explicitly identified as European-Union representatives, as in a play ("Vitus," by Margareta Skantze, performed in Karlskrona in 1992) in which a bucolic Swedish coastal fishing hamlet is transformed -- thanks to a German-speaking EU technocrat -- into a seedy tourist town dominated by sleazy nightclubs. Other public dramatizations present generic big-business figures from the Continent; and some portray Swedish entrepreneurs possessed by an obsessive market mind-set -- the familiar made alien.

The actors Paul Kessel and John Fiske -- known to the public as "Kesselofski and Fiske" -- create comic dramas for social movements (including the anti-EU campaign) and for public and private theaters. Born, raised and radicalized in London, they moved to Sweden seventeen years ago, thanks to

Swedish wives. In a district on the outskirts of Uppsala, they were asked to participate in a parents' tribunal protesting recent cutbacks in childcare funding. For this they created a sketch in which two British consultants come to Sweden with a computer program called "Easy Cuts." As Kessel explained: "you feed in all the information of how much [money] has got to be saved, and then it tells you the best, easiest way to save it, who to take it from." After they wrote the piece, the actors learned that Uppsala's local government had in fact hired a British consulting firm to help plan cutbacks.

By portraying British consultants who bear "Easy Cuts" software, Kesselofski and Fiske present to the parents' tribunal a social analysis in allegorical form. We note, first, that the consultants come from outside of Sweden -- specifically from England, an EU country whose social-welfare policies contrast sharply with Sweden's in most respects. They bring with them a market sensibility that is foreign, un-Swedish. Second, the fictional consultants anthropomorphize market relations: they give human faces to the abstract workings of the market in its relation to the Swedish welfare state. Yet there is an eerie lack of humanity to these two human forms: money is the sole

imperative of their universe. They feed in budgetary goals to their "Easy Cuts" computer and are indifferent to the effects that cutbacks may have on people.

The zealous male business consultant who lacks larger loyalties is a recurrent character in imaginative critical accounts of Sweden's increasingly neoliberal economy. Joining him are executives with parachutes (in Swedish they are not "golden") and entrepreneurs with mobile telephones -- also known as yuppienallar, yuppie teddy-bears.

Some of these advanced-capitalist characters appear in a 1993 poster campaign by Kommunal, a major labor union of public-sector workers. Kommunal made an effort to protect its members' jobs by mounting a general defense of the welfare state. The union purchased billboard space in Stockholm's subway stations and other locations to run a variety of satirical images.

One of these posters depicts a government office in the present age of cutbacks and privatization. A businessman has submitted a bid to take over a nursing-home facility once run by the state. A government official reads the bid and comments on it enthusiastically: "Impressive, one employee for 175 old and feeble persons! How will you manage to do it?" The businessman answers: "Have you heard of valium?"

This scene offers Stockholm's subway-riders a comprehensible allegory for the ongoing privatization and commodification⁷⁴ of social services. It is worth noting the poster's provocative insinuation that the representatives of both the state and the market evince the same obsession with the bottom line and the same conspicuous obliviousness to human needs.⁷⁵ The artist (Robert Nyberg) accentuates the mood of indifference by giving both the businessman and the civil servant a relaxed posture, a contented smile and an unperturbed gaze. Once again, market processes and mentalities are allegorized in human forms that manifest a chilly, ghostly absence of human sympathy.

It is clear that this political poster uses exaggeration to make its point about welfare-system retrenchment. No

⁷⁴ The Swedish general-welfare state has often been described as having successfully de-commodified important aspects of life, including health-care and (to a lesser extent) housing. "De-commodification occurs," Esping-Andersen (2000:157) explains, "when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market." Today we may speak of a (thus far) partial re-commodification of essential services.

⁷⁵ The Left Party (1993) touches on this theme in its official platform statement: "We want the public sector to be given the opportunity to further develop its culture of caring instead of copying the limited and inhuman ideals of profitability that typify the private sector."

Swedish nursing homes have a staff ratio of 1 to 175, and none nonchalantly dispense valium. Yet it is worth noting that on this matter, life has indeed imitated art. In 1997 - - four years after the poster was made -- a government inquiry revealed scandalously inadequate levels of care in a large number of facilities for the elderly. It was discovered that the recent privatization of many services had led to inadequate staffing levels and to food quality so poor as to cause malnutrition among the elderly. Two years later, in 1999, a patients' advocacy group charged that Swedish hospitals were adapting to staffing cuts by giving a sedative drug to Alzheimers patients, thereby making them easier and cheaper to control (Dagens SverigeNytt 1999a).

Another poster from the campaign by Kommunal, the public-sector union, depicts an incongruous encounter at a Swedish day-care center. Swedes often say that the care of children lies at the heart of the Swedish social welfare system (Daun 1996:65). In this scene, a grinning man bends over to introduce himself to a small girl who drags a stuffed toy cat: "I am your new cash-flow manager!" ("Jag är er nye cash-flow manager!") he says. The girl responds, "Is it contagious?"

Her reply is perhaps only superficially a non-sequitur. The poster pushes viewers to ask what it is that this child sees as diseased and possibly infectious in the new financial officer. Contagion is one of the idioms people use in explaining how -- as social worker Rikard Sollman told me -- a "new, harder spirit has permeated the social sector during the last years." Something foreign and catching is spreading through the society, and it is able to transform honorable Swedes into persons whose human character may be suspect.

How does the artist mark the cash-flow manager as the bearer of diseased or alien qualities? The manager's self-introduction ("Jag är er nye cash-flow manager!") blends Swedish and English -- or rather, it blends standard Swedish with the anglicized Swedish of business, since "cash-flow manager" is an increasingly accepted phrase in corporate circles in Sweden. This diction suggests that the cash-flow manager is a Swede whose categories of thought come from outside Sweden, from the world of global commerce. The spatial ordering of the picture also contributes to the sense of a confrontation between two very different worlds. On one side are two men, one of them faceless, whose formal attire and portfolios betoken their business mentality. On the other side, behind the girl and her toy cat, there is a

toddler in a wagon, youngsters on the floor, and an infant putting his hand on the mouth of the woman who holds him. This is the intimate, cooperative, maternal world of a Swedish day-care center -- a symbol, perhaps, for the general-welfare society as a whole.

In this as in certain other dramatizations of the clash between Sweden and "the evil world outside," there is an intriguing subtext of gender. It is worth remembering the gender gap in the referendum on EU membership; a majority of Swedish women were opposed to joining the Union. The movement against EU membership contrasted a "papist, elitist and sexist Europe" with Swedish democracy and egalitarianism (Trädgårdh 1999:22). To the extent that the comprehensive welfare society is viewed as the fruit of political struggles by women (see Ohlander 1992), and to the extent that the EU is seen as the creation of a club of male politicians and businessmen, it is possible to frame the question of EU-affiliation as a struggle between a female Sweden and a male Europe.

The actors Kesselofski and Fiske do just that in a 1993 play entitled "Dangerous Liaisons." In this satire, a feminine Sweden begs a brutish male Europe to accept her. "Take me, take me, I'll do anything you want," she exclaims,

in an explicit parody of conservative former prime minister Carl Bildt's eagerness to see Sweden accepted by the EU. When the macho Europe character gets his hands on the trusting Sweden, he treats her with contempt, pushing her to the floor and forcing her to accept the Maastricht economic edicts in a stylized allegory of marital rape. The play, at once macabre and comic, suggests that the EU is not simply a plutocratic project but the embodiment of a masculinist ideology. To make this point, the drama draws upon what a German scholar has called the "rhetorical identification of the Swedish welfare state as woman, emphasizing 'female' characteristics (care, unaggressiveness, warmth)" (Schröder 1997:132).

Let me turn, finally, to the street-theater performances of five women aligned with the Left Party. The troupe call themselves Rödabettorna, the Red Beets. One of their performances takes place on the plaza outside a Stockholm subway entrance, where there appears a creature who is cloaked in black and holds a scythe. He would be the archetypal Swedish personification of Death (made famous in Bergman's film, "The Seventh Seal") but for a few details: he wears a tie and a top hat, and -- lest anyone miss the point -- he bears a sign that says Marknaden, the Market. In some

performances, he also goes by another name, "the Man from Brussels."

"Marknaden" explains that he prefers to work as an "invisible hand," but sometimes he must act in plain view. He undertakes a brick-by-brick demolition of the Swedish social-democratic society, which the Red Beets represent by means of cardboard cartons that bear the names of communal music schools, publicly-supported old-age homes, and other imperiled institutions. Along the way, he fires women when they become pregnant, belittles immigrants, and silences labor organizers.

By anthropomorphizing the market in the figure of Death, the Red Beets emphasize its unyielding, implacable nature: nothing, after all, is as implacable as death. "The market rules us," troupe-member Inger Stark explains, and "it is the market that decides how things will look in our country." The new Sweden, she told me, is not likely to be "a society whose point of departure is the equal worth of all human beings." The market has made that vision of equal human worth appear quixotic.

Like the Red Beets, Kesselofski and Fiske seek to communicate a relentless quality of the market. In one of their songs, they employ an image of voracious

industrialists: "We are the industrial kings of Sweden; we earn a lot, at the top, and we're still not satisfied." The Red Beets, too, tell the pessimistic tale of market forces that are always hungry for more and still not finished with Sweden. As Inger put it, "the market will never be satisfied . . . the market intends to keep at it until everything has been destroyed."

These various dramatizations of the global market's engagement with the Swedish general-welfare society are united by a common rhetorical strategy: they anthropomorphize the market while simultaneously showing it to be devoid of real humanity. In other words, they use human characters to make the workings of the market understandable, while at the same time portraying the market as a suprapersonal force unconstrained by human values -- least of all Swedish values.

More broadly, one can understand these public dramatizations as attempts to grapple with three challenges facing the left in its efforts to oppose a market-dominated society in general and EU-membership in particular:

First, a challenge of complexity: How does one tell the public -- in a simple, vivid and convincing way -- about the implications of economic transformations and societal choices that entail uncountable institutional particulars? Moreover,

how is one to characterize the moral tone and ethical consequences of a complex sociopolitical system (such as the EU or, in the Western hemisphere, NAFTA)? We saw that activists used personal indifference as a metaphor for systemic, institutional indifference: the cynical consultant as a symbol for the brutality of unbridled capitalism. In like manner, the naive, trusting individual serves as a model for Swedish national vulnerability.

Second, a challenge of discourse: How does one get past the neoliberal market-language of naturalness, necessity and inevitability? "There is no alternative," Margaret Thatcher famously declared; and some of her Swedish admirers have spoken of "den enda vägen," the only road. Political humor makes it possible to mock the confident language of market apologists and to shift the terms of the debate.

Third, a challenge of identity: What do EU membership and concomitant economic transformations mean for conceptions of shared purposes and loyalties? The EU decision affects more than interest rates and trade deficits, as many on the left seek to emphasize: it is a collective moral and cultural crossroads. What is the meaning of our shared life? How do we choose to relate to one another, and what sort of society do we wish to create? Hard-won institutions and civic habits

are vulnerable, as is what Lund professor Hampus Lyttkens calls "the fundamental idea that we exist for one another" (Öhrström 1994:A9). In a typical dramatization, Sweden's most sacred values and institutions are said to be at stake, and it is their sacrifice on the altar of the market that most clearly reveals their pricelessness.

Chapter 5. Existential Solidarity:

The Making of Human Sacredness

. . . each of us lives in and through an immense movement of the hands of other people. The hands of other people lift us from the womb. The hands of other people grow the food we eat, weave the clothes we wear and build the shelters we inhabit. The hands of other people give pleasure to our bodies in moments of passion and aid and comfort in times of affliction and distress. . . . and, at the end, it is the hands of other people that lower us into the earth.

- James Stockinger (Bellah
et al. 1991:104)

"Solidarity is an answer to the cosmic riddle," explained Sara, a Swede of African descent, to me and a dozen left-leaning twenty-somethings sitting on the floor of the Björkögården conference center north of Stockholm. "We are

born alone, we don't know why we find ourselves on this planet. It's strange that we even exist at all." Some people, Sara continued, "assume that they will live forever," and they try to amass whatever advantages they can, to position themselves for an endless future. Others face the mystery of existence differently: "They think, 'Why are we all on this earth together? Maybe we exist to get to know one another and to build something together.' These are the ones who believe in solidarity."

Sara's formulation suggests the way in which, for many socially engaged Swedes, the notion of solidarity marks a particular life philosophy. Solidarity, for her, is a vision of shared purposes and of joy in collaboration. She contrasts this philosophy with a favorite cultural antagonist, the private pursuit of wealth and status. Here as in other Swedish discussions of solidarity, the hopeful space of communal endeavor begins someplace beyond the capitalist conception (imported, they say, from America) of life as a race.

This chapter begins with a look at solidarity in theory.⁷⁶ I note the diverse connotations of the word, and how it has been used to paint a vision of interdependent social existence. Then I explore solidarity in practice, both in institutional arrangements and in the details of one conscientious Swede's daily life. Finally, I suggest that we can understand solidarity, in its Swedish context, as the making of human sacredness and the staging of an idea of human equality.

A rhetorical dinosaur?

At an election-night party in 1994, in a civic conference center on Drottninggatan, Social Democrats celebrated their political comeback to the tunes of "When the Saints Come Marching In" and other English and Swedish songs played by a live band. A couple in the crowd -- a Social Democratic functionary and her husband -- asked me about my work, and I told them that I was researching ideas and practices of solidarity. "Solidarity? Couldn't you find something else to study?" came the man's reply; he added that

⁷⁶ Daniel Bell (1992) once quipped that an academic is someone who asks: if something works in practice, does it also work in theory?

I might as well be studying dinosaurs. This was one of the many doubtful responses I received when I framed my project in terms of that famous political word.

People often suggested that I had arrived too late, that "solidarity" had died a few years before, roughly around the time of the assassination of Olof Palme (in 1986) or the election of a right-of-center prime minister (1991). Typical was the avowal of the research librarian who crept up to my desk to say: "You asked about solidarity, but do you know that it's gone now? We have no solidarity in Sweden anymore . . ." Meanwhile, conservative friends lamented my inability to see that solidarity is just an old-fashioned piece of rhetoric, empty of meaning. Use of the word, a diamond trader told me, is a badge of left-wing affiliation and a boast about one's self-perceived altruism.

Even on the left, my focus of study could be seen as an anachronistic if cheerful curiosity. Articles about my work appeared in little left-wing publications like Nordstjärnsflamman ("The Blaze of the North Star"); one Left Party newsletter profiled me under the puzzled headline, "He is doing a doctorate in solidarity." Yet there as elsewhere among Left Party supporters, Greens and Social Democrats, solidaritet (solidarity) remains an honnörsord, a word of

honor. The term has enjoyed durable, if fluctuating, esteem over many decades; it has made its home in public appeals to support imperiled persons in Sweden and abroad, in the platform statements of the three political parties just mentioned,⁷⁷ in the speeches of labor-union leaders, in newspaper opinion-pieces about current events, and in the shoptalk of social activists. There are "solidarity races" for runners, "solidarity shops" that sell cooperatively produced goods from impoverished lands, "solidarity festivals" that celebrate ethnic pluralism, activist conferences about solidarity, Church-of-Sweden sermons and collections for solidarity, and a "house of solidarity" (mentioned in Chapter 1) on Stockholm's southern island that accommodates the offices of such internationalist organizations as the Swedish-Filipino Association and the local Kurdish chapter of the Red Crescent.

⁷⁷ By contrast, according to poet and social critic Olof Buckard (1994), Prime Minister Carl Bildt's administration (1991-1994) never used the word solidaritet. (Bildt's regime was a minority coalition of the Moderate, Liberal, Center and Christian Democratic parties; to secure a parliamentary majority, the administration depended upon the support of a right-wing populist party called New Democracy, notable for its anti-immigrant rhetoric.) In the late 1990s, however, even leaders of the neoliberal Moderate Party occasionally employed the word solidaritet.

Etymological journeys

An overview of the history and uses of the term "solidarity" may be in order.⁷⁸ The juridical use of the concept can be traced to ancient Greece and Rome. In these societies, as J. E. S. Hayward (1959:270) recounts, solidarity meant "coproprietal obligations of mutual assistance and collective responsibility" with regard to debts. Specifically, each member of an extended family "was held responsible for the payment of the whole of the debt contracted by any member, and had the right to receive payment of debts owed to the collectivity" (Hayward 1959:270). The term traveled from Roman law through the Napoleonic legal codes and into nineteenth-century French political discourse. It was important to Charles Fourier and August Comte, and later in the century also to Emile Durkheim and to Roman Catholic theologians (Liedman 1999:15-23; Hayward 1959; Metz 1999:191-197). In early twentieth-century France, the term was favored by reformers who advocated "mutual aid and cooperation" and desired "harmonious unity"

⁷⁸ For a comprehensive bibliography of works on the history and interpretation of solidarity, see Arndt 1999.

within society (Hayward 1959:282; see Liedman 1999:5-9). By 1937, a major international exposition in Paris included a "Pavillon de la Solidarité," whose guidebook called the concept "the fundamental stance of all French social policy" (Hayward 1959:282-283).

The word "solidarity" entered English from French in the middle of the nineteenth century (Oxford English Dictionary 1989:972), and the term percolated into Swedish at around the same time. The adjectival form solidarisk (translated uncomfortably in English as solidaric, solidary or solidaristic) first appeared in Swedish in 1834, deriving from its German cognate solidarisch; the noun appeared in 1837 as a term for collective responsibility for debts, and in 1849 in its broader meaning as a "feeling of affinity with and willingness to support and help other people" (Nationalencyklopedins ordbok 1996:208).

Solidarity gradually gained ground as a salient concept in Swedish political discourse during the early decades of the twentieth century. In a 1924 syndicalist tract, Solidaritet i teori och praxis ("Solidarity in theory and practice"), Gustav Sjöström wrote:

Does the word solidarity need an explanation?

Hardly. In an age such as ours, which not unjustly is called the age of monopolism . . . in such an age, there is surely no one who does not know that solidarity means a . . . united action between and concord among individuals with similar interests (Sjöström 1924:5).

Sjöström implies that in his circle of militant workers, the term was already widely understood. It is worth noting that he uses the word "solidarity" as a call to arms for small-group collective action. Already by this time, there was a partial divergence between two senses of solidarity: the Durkheimian sociological notion of solidarity as a description of societal cohesion, and the more normative labor-movement use of the word as a valorization of political engagement and shared struggle.

The labor movement remained the principal home for the word and its siblings. A 1936 congress of the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (Landsorganisationen), for example, considered a motion from the metal-workers union for a solidaritetsbetonad lönepolitik, a wages policy that emphasizes solidarity (Wadensjö 1995:53). Such a policy was

later legislated -- requiring better-positioned workers to forgo wage gains while the wages of those in less-favored sectors were brought up. The concept of solidarity remained important in domestic politics for the rest of the century, first as a goal of the proponents of the general-welfare society (roughly from the 1930s through the 1970s) and later as a rallying cry of persons protesting the retrenchment of that society.

The word also gained currency in foreign affairs. As early as 1930, for example, there was public discussion of the possibility that a well-armed Sweden would team up with other nations in a "solidarity" defense against potential aggressors such as Mussolini's Italy and Stalin's Russia (Tingsten 1973:551). The solidarity of workers confronting capitalists thus became the model for small states seeking an "effective measure against the arrogance of the great powers" (Ruth 1986:256).

During the 1950s, the poverty and instability of the developing countries "entered into Swedish popular consciousness" (Ruth 1986:254), and international solidarity was seen as a part of the remedy. In a 1964 essay, literary critic Lars Gustafsson (1964:116-117) observed his youthful generation's "feeling of responsibility and solidarity with

the world around us." The practical efforts arising from that "new feeling of solidarity," Gustafsson asserted, formed a significant part of Sweden's "spiritual climate." During the same decade, "solidarity became a key word," ethnologist Tom O'Dell (1997:188) writes, "as youths took up the fight against 'USA imperialism' and asserted themselves as supporters of the weak throughout the Global Village."

Swedes provided assistance through such activities as fund-raising, journalism, educational campaigns, demonstrations at embassies, the creation of non-governmental organizations, efforts to push the Swedish government to take action, and the promotion of speaking tours by liberation-movement representatives. They also did volunteer service in war-torn lands, sometimes offering "the last full measure of devotion" (Lincoln 1953:23).

In an erudite meditation on the concept of solidarity, intellectual historian Sven-Eric Liedman (1999:85-88) argues that such support of the dispossessed brought with it a shift in the meaning of solidarity. Among the builders of the People's Home in the 1930s and 1940s, solidarity was an expression of reciprocity, an ideal of mutual aid. By the 1960s, solidarity had come to mean giving help to the impoverished inhabitants of what was usually called the Third

World. The element of mutuality was no longer present, and the "boundary line between solidarity and charity [was] erased" (Liedman 1999:88).

The left-leaning economist Kenneth Hermele (1992:31-33) traces a related, but later, shift in the meaning of solidarity. In the 1960s and 1970s, Sweden "had a solidarity movement which was one of the strongest in the West" and which participated in "a world-wide struggle against imperialism." There was an element of expected reciprocity: "the struggles in distant countries would contribute to our efforts to overthrow capitalism at home. . . . People's power promised to be more democratic than the formal democracy which we enjoyed at home" (Hermele 1992:31). It was partly for this reason that many of the more militant Swedes allied themselves with popular movements in Vietnam, Mozambique, South Africa, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Chile, and (in the late 1970s) Zimbabwe and Nicaragua. Their efforts were enlivened by several victories, not least the American defeat in Vietnam.

By the 1980s, Hermele argues, the historical tide had turned: the Reagan-Thatcher era achieved the restoration -- symbolized by a strengthened World Bank and International Monetary Fund -- of a global order in which the wealthy

countries controlled the poorer ones. The liberation struggles that Swedes had supported had in many cases been crushed; a few had won power but had then been transmogrified into mere "agents of state-led modernization and development" (Hermele 1992:33). As a consequence, the solidarity movement shifted from shared anti-imperialist struggle to the provision of development aid. It lost some of its social-critical edge and became one of the channels, together with religious groups, through which the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) distributes international aid money. Hermele is skeptical of this role as "intermediaries in the aid business" and "executors of the official aid policy." He prefers a solidarity of mutual alliance with "trade unions, peasant organizations, women's groups, professional organizations, cooperatives, etc." (Hermele 1992:33).

Hermele and Liedman thus both lament the erosion of a distinction between solidarity and charitable aid. Solidarity entails a collaboration of equals, a co-fashioning of "our common future" (Hermele 1992:33); charity, by contrast, assumes subordination. I will return to this distinction in the concluding section of this chapter.

First, however, I would like to offer two accounts of solidarity in practice, one institutional and one personal.

Persons in their own right

Liedman (1999:117) recommends that we "not let solidarity become merely sentimental but rather anchor it in vigorous institutions." He is right to emphasize the materialization of solidaristic values in social organization, and an institutional account would seem to be warranted in this chapter. Elsewhere I have attempted an encyclopedic look at Swedish institutions (Palmer, in press), but here it may be more illuminating to explore one arena of solidarity in greater detail.

Attractive choices abound: the country's treatment of prisoners is sometimes said to be the most humane in the world (too much so for some crime victims and their families), and the resources Sweden devotes to the disabled may well be unparalleled. But my informants most often mentioned child welfare as a realm in which the solidaristic character of Swedish society is evident. As Daun (1996:65) observes, "there is a self-stereotype depicting Swedes as especially concerned with their children's well-being, a

thesis that can be underpinned by references to public arrangements for the care and protection of children . . . " Let me explore those arrangements.

"Swedish children have it best in the world" boasts a headline in the Aftonbladet newspaper (Österholm 2000). The article reports on UNICEF's first investigation of children's conditions in the twenty-nine industrial nations of the OECD. UNICEF found that despite having the highest percentage of single-parent households, Sweden has the lowest level of poverty among children. Another UNICEF analysis credits Sweden with the world's lowest under-five mortality rate, a statistic that UNICEF considers to be the "single most important indicator of the state of a nation's children" (UNICEF 1997:81,95). Other recent international studies portray Sweden as the "world leader with regard to children's survival and education" and "the safest country in the world for children" (Norlin 1994:22-23). What are the institutional sources of such achievements?

1) Universal child support and parental leave

Health and welfare programs in Sweden are generally comprehensive and universal (in contrast to remedial, means-tested approaches that single out the needy). Coverage for

all citizens helps prevent the development of an underclass condemned to separate, inferior social services. Measures supporting children include free health and dental care as well as a monthly child benefit and child-care allowances. In the 1930s, the Scandinavian countries and England pioneered in paying such benefits to mothers; in the rest of Europe, they were paid to fathers (Ohlander 1992:225).

Scandinavians enjoy long periods of state-supported parental leave. In Sweden, for each child born, a parent is entitled to stay home -- receiving about four-fifths of normal income -- for 360 workdays, with certain options for extension. These days are in addition to paid leave when the child is ill, and they may be used at any time during the child's first twelve years. Most often, a mother and father divide the parental leave, with the father taking a much smaller portion. In legislation unprecedented in the world, Sweden in 1995 began reserving one month of parental leave for fathers (a policy later also adopted by Norway). Fathers who choose not to participate forfeit the couple's parental benefit payment for that month. The goal is to promote gender equality and increase the already comparatively high rates of paternal participation in child care.

2) Quality public day-care and public schools

Swedish women have exceptionally high rates of participation in paid employment, and the rate for mothers of infant children is the highest in Western Europe (Swedish Institute 1996:1). Correspondingly, young Swedish children spend a large fraction of their time in professional child-care institutions. These institutions are publicly funded and available to all children, thanks to decades of struggle by female parliamentarians and activists (Ohlander 1992). Parents may choose between day-care centers, part-time children's groups, drop-in pre-school activity centers, and childminders based in private homes. Most of these services are municipally organized, but some take the form of nonprofit foundations, private companies and parent cooperatives. User fees cover 14 percent of the total costs, with tax revenues covering the rest (Swedish Institute 1996:2).

Schools in Sweden are similarly well-funded and high-quality. Until the late 1990s there were few private schools, and the public-school system emphasizes inclusive values (such as aiding children with special difficulties) rather than targeting resources toward the most talented pupils. As in the day-care centers, much school activity

cultivates children's early independence and self-sufficiency -- a peculiar preoccupation of Swedish child-rearing (Daun 1996:64). At the same time, cooperative social skills are of central importance, and these are also nurtured in extensive after-school activities, leisure-time centers, clubs and sports leagues.

3) Pro-active social policy and preventative public-health campaigns

Sweden's combination of strong popular organizations (notably labor unions and political parties) and activist state agencies provides effective institutional means to define and respond to social problems. Typically, debates in the media will be followed by the appointment of an expert investigative commission, whose findings prompt new legislation. This pro-active approach is particularly evident in matters of health and safety, where state institutions such as the Child Environment Council play an important role. In the 1990s, Sweden has been an international pioneer in providing maternity care and promoting breastfeeding; in implementing parenting classes; and in offering play therapy to hospitalized children. The nation's renowned traffic-safety efforts often focus on

children, as in the recent campaign (described in Chapter 3) providing young Stockholm schoolchildren with luminescent green caps that are easily visible to motorists.

4) Institutional safeguards for children's rights

In 1979, the Swedish parliament passed a law stating that "a child may not be subjected to corporal punishment or other injurious treatment" (Sverne 1993:301). Sweden thus became the first nation on earth in which parents were forbidden to strike their children. Denmark, Finland, Norway, Austria, Germany, and Israel later passed similar legislation. In Sweden, the law has been publicized on milk cartons, on television, and in schools. It is widely known and accepted, and almost never a matter for court proceedings.

The Office of the Children's Ombudsman is a state agency established in 1993 to champion the rights and interests of children in Sweden. It bases its work on the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, and it seeks to ensure that Sweden follows the Convention. In addition, the Children's Ombudsman and her staff investigate children's life circumstances; mold public opinion; propose new legislation; put pressure on public authorities and private

corporations when the well-being of children is at stake; and maintain a telephone hotline through which children can express grievances, make policy suggestions, and learn more about their rights.

Children's interests are also safeguarded by numerous popular organizations, including BRIS (Children's Rights in Society), Swedish Save the Children, and the Swedish UNICEF Committee. Together with the Children's Ombudsman, such groups have worked to foster public debate concerning day-care, child pornography, incest, children bullying other children, and many other issues. They have also helped make Sweden a center for research and activism on children's conditions around the globe; in 1996, for example, Stockholm hosted the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

5) A child-empowering culture

Sweden's literature written for children is internationally famous for being frank, open and non-patronizing. This sensibility was starkly visible in the critical social realism of many 1960s and early-1970s works, but it is equally present in the more fantasy-oriented children's books of the decades before and after that period.

Strong, self-reliant female characters have been something of a Swedish specialty; the most celebrated of these is Astrid Lindgren's Pippi Longstocking.

The frankness that characterizes children's literature is also typical of conversations between adults and children. Foreigners are sometimes surprised by the way Swedish parents engage in serious discussions with their children, on morally-charged topics ranging from fair play to drugs to sexuality (sex education begins in first grade at the age of seven). Taking children seriously is seen as a matter of basic respect for persons who exist in their own right; as a Swedish adage says, "one doesn't own one's children" (Daun 1996:68).

Let me conclude this overview with a word about current predicaments. Swedes in the 1990s have witnessed continuing reductions in state support for children and families. The interlude of conservative rule (1991-94) brought tax breaks for the affluent that strained state budgets, and even the current Social Democratic government has curtailed parental benefits and other programs. On op-ed pages and in public debates, children's advocates routinely plead to shield children from the cutbacks; conservative economists counter

by claiming that there is no alternative to welfare-system retrenchment if Sweden is to remain competitive in global markets.

There is also an ongoing cultural challenge to Sweden's child-care institutions. Many women say that they would like to spend more time raising their children, and they feel that prevailing attitudes and institutions make it hard to be a homemaker. More generally, there are those who argue that traditional patterns of authority and economic dependency within families have been supplanted by reliance on the state, so that the family "has probably become weaker in Sweden than anywhere else" in the industrialized West (Popenoe 1991:69). Much of what children need is guaranteed by society and, as a last resort, does not depend on familial bonds. (Although as in most of the world, the family remains the chief provider of economic and social support for the vast majority of children.) Some Swedes say that this institutional arrangement undermines family solidarity, while others feel that it reduces patriarchy and frees family members to nurture genuine affection not based on economic need.

Thus are the policies for the promotion of children's well-being in Sweden. I now turn from those massively

collective manifestations of solidarity to its intimate expression in the daily life of one individual.

Eating Right or Left

This section might also have been titled "My Dinner with Pelle," because it concerns a shared meal. I want to use the story of a simple and, for Pelle, rather ordinary dinner to provide a taste of the significance of dietary morality for solidaristic engagement in Sweden.

First, however, I must get to my dinner appointment with this 26-year-old social activist. The subway takes me to the working-class Stockholm suburb known as Högdalen. There I exit and walk past a kiosk where an Iranian immigrant sells newspapers and candy, past a branch of the Konsum cooperative supermarket, and over a crosswalk that has chime-signals for the blind. I enter the courtyard of an apartment complex built in the Swedish functionalist style of the 1930s. The buildings are three-stories tall, connected by tree-lined pedestrian and bicycle paths.

In this complex lies Pelle's one-room flat. Stepping into his place, you might think that you had stumbled into a depository vault of a university library -- where they keep

all the social-justice books that nobody reads anymore. Pelle's wall-to-wall bookshelves each hold two layers of books, one layer packed behind the other. A book on world hunger is lodged between one on feminist theory and another giving the backgrounds of current members of the Swedish parliament. Above the bookshelves are rows of plastic boxes, each box labeled according to the clippings and papers it contains. "Amnesty Press." "The Vegetarian Society." "The Left Party." "Latin American base communities." More than fifty such boxes.

Amidst the books and the boxes sits Pelle with the latest editions of the forty-six political newspapers and newsletters to which he subscribes. One of them, I notice, contains an article he himself wrote: "Militanta tanter," militant matrons (Strindlund 1995:12). The article tells the story of women in Dover, England, many of them pensioners, who protest the maltreatment of calves and other animals as they are shipped between countries.

With his four or five millimeters of hair, you might mistake Pelle for a neo-Nazi "skinhead." In fact, he cuts his hair himself. Curious to know what a good haircut costs these days, he asks how much I paid for mine. I answer that it cost 150 kronor (about twenty-three dollars). As a

Christian as well as a socialist, Pelle explains that religious traditions of simplicity often include shaved heads.

In the cramped kitchenette corner of the room, a vegan meal is almost ready. Pelle tests the rice and lentils and pulls a fruit salad out of the refrigerator. The ingredients had earlier in the day been purchased with care at the cooperative supermarket and at a more commercial supermarket. Pelle goes to the store with a little white booklet called MUDI-MUMS, a Swedish acronym for "food without the animal industry, food without large multinational corporations." This guide lists the brand-names of common products, identifying the parent corporations and evaluating their treatment of workers and of animals. It is published by the Swedish branch of Friends of the Earth.

I have previously learned the hard way to take the MUDI-MUMS guide seriously. That was at a dinner some months earlier with Åsa (mentioned above). She received my contribution to the meal of two cartons of Del Monte pineapple juice with considerable embarrassment, and never opened them. The problem was not that I was so cheap. Rather, as she later explained to me, the problem was Del Monte's ruthless treatment of workers at its fruit

plantations, something about which Åsa knew much, as a leader of the Swedish-Philippines solidarity association. At my dinner with Pelle, I am more conscientious, and I have brought along a MUDI-MUMS-approved brand of juice.

It is worth mentioning that there are several other ways in which consumers in Sweden can find out about the sometimes unsavory genealogies of particular foodstuffs. A local grocer not far from my Stockholm address sometimes taped black plastic strips in front of the dubious brands on his shelves -- but his was a lone, selfless and eccentric witness. More common, indeed ubiquitous, are the roughly ten standard symbols used throughout Sweden to certify ecologically sound items. These packaging labels originate with nonprofit environmental organizations, supermarket chains, the Swedish state, and the European Union (see Croall 2000:26). Their sheer number creates some confusion and partially erodes their credibility (Karlsson 1996:A5). Yet another proposed label is being planned by a parliamentary subcommittee to certify gender equality at the company where the product was made.

For left-oriented internationalists like Pelle, a significant new certification label is the "justice mark." This symbol was recently launched by church, labor, consumer

and development-aid groups to attest to the reasonable working conditions and equitable terms of trade behind certain coffee, chocolate, fruit, honey and other imported foodstuffs. The goods are of high quality, and some consumers say that they taste "extra good" when one reads about the humane circumstances of their production (Sandell 1995:3). Nonetheless, when a top labor leader was unsuspectingly served one of the justice-marked coffees, he asked whether the coffee thermos had been properly cleaned and said that the coffee had a taste of horse.

Happily my dinner with Pelle holds no such surprises; indeed the lentils and rice are delicately spiced and quite delicious. As is often the case when persons of differing dietary moralities share a meal, Pelle and I discuss the food while we eat it. He eschews my fancier, yuppie-vegetarian cuisine for a simpler, cheaper vegan diet of what are sometimes called peasant grains.

The descriptive booklet that accompanies the MUDI-MUMS guide supports Pelle's humble orientation, defining many products as "luxury goods" extracted from former colonies by the wealthy countries. But Pelle's preference for culinary simplicity seems to come above all from his spiritually-animated heroes such as Mahatma Gandhi. "Transnational

connections" (Hannerz 1996) are clearly the rule here: from heroes to foodstuffs to corporations to ecological certification schemes, everything crosses borders. Not least, the beneficiaries of Pelle's frugality are the developing world's grass-roots political projects to which he directs a sizable portion of his modest income.

Over a non-dairy "ice bean" dessert -- a luxury that Pelle reserves for company -- I try to be a good ethnographer by asking Pelle questions about the social contexts of his life trajectory, though not in those words. He tells me about United Nations Day at the public school that he attended as a child at age twelve or thirteen. Each October, this full day U.N. observance was devoted to global issues. At snack time, Pelle says, "one divided up the snack" according to the actual distributions of wealth in the world. "A few [pupils] got to be USA. They got many gingerbread biscuits...[Many pupils were] Asia, they got terribly few, [even] just one gingerbread biscuit." At other schools, he says, a whole school lunch was divided up this way, with hamburgers going to those representing the USA and other rich countries, and "a bit of rice" to everyone else.

Such international comparisons also struck Pelle during an exchange year in Tyler, Texas. He offers as an example

the difference between Swedish and American holiday meals: "It's more fun to celebrate Christmas when one knows that families in the whole city . . . have similarly much Christmas food on the table; that feels better, one sleeps better at night." Such reassuring equity was absent in Texas.

Pelle's Christmas table in recent years holds no holiday ham, lamb or sausage. The suffering of "non-human animals" has been added to his longstanding efforts of solidarity with beleaguered human beings. He has become a local leader of the Swedish Society Against Painful Experiments on Animals, Sweden's largest animal-rights organization (with 52,000 members).

A newspaper in Sundsvall, Pelle's former hometown, printed a bizarre picture of Pelle on its front page one day in 1997 (Dagbladet Nya Samhället 1997). The photo shows Pelle standing near the entrance to a circus, wearing a plastic elephant trunk and large elephant ears as well as an old-fashioned, numbered prison-inmate's uniform. Surrounded by parents and children with amused, puzzled or pensive expressions, Pelle bears a placard that reads "Circus equals lifetime imprisonment."

Here Pelle stands as a witness against cruelty to animals at the circus.⁷⁹ But his action forms part of his encompassing opposition to brutality in all its guises. He deploys the same characteristically imaginative and self-effacing style of moral witness to protest such things as the Indonesian occupation of East Timor and the sometimes violence-laden pornography at the local adult video store. (That mix of concerns may sound incongruous, but an unsympathetic study of social activists commissioned by the Swedish police noted a similar clustering: young, left-oriented individuals often combine engagement in animal rights, anti-pornography, anti-bank, anti-racist, and ecological actions [Lodeinius and Wikström 1998].)

One of Pelle's articles is curiously titled: "Animal-oppression, oppression of women, and racial oppression: Can a young leftist eat meat?" (Strindlund 1996). Here Pelle draws together these seemingly disparate strands by arguing that the common issue is whether those with the most power are free to dominate others. Elsewhere he asserts that the

⁷⁹ Pelle is not alone in his concern about the welfare of animals in circuses. Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia, have outlawed the use of circus animals, as has Redmond, Washington; Seattle may follow suit (Zebrowski 2000:A3).

core of ethics, "whether it is a question of animals or human beings, is to put oneself in the others' situation"

(Jäderberg 1997:17). This is especially hard to do with regard to animals, Pelle says, which makes our treatment of them "a test of fire" for our capacities for "unselfish love."

I have noted how Pelle's dietary conscientiousness partially constitutes and marks out the contours of his moral engagement. Let me emphasize two themes. First, Pelle and his allies use questions of consumption to critique what they describe as diverse but interconnected patterns of domination, brutality and indifference in modern society. As another animal-rights reformer put it, "Sexism, nazism, homophobia, capitalism and animal oppression are different sides of the same coin . . . it is a question of the strong having power over the weak and drawing profit from them" (Pettersson 1998).

Second, these engaged individuals respond to what they see as a cruel, often tragic world by maintaining high expectations for personal moral accountability.⁸⁰ In diet as

⁸⁰ There are links here to certain distinctive working-class conceptions of conscientiousness (skötsamhet), which Ronny Ambjörnsson (1989, 1991) has examined in the early Swedish (continued...)

in other practices, they try to cultivate empathetic attention to "unknown friends" (Palme 1994) and they bear witness on behalf of those who suffer. If this attitude sounds Christian and perhaps specifically Lutheran, we may wish to view Pelle, with his remarkable personal asceticism, as something of a Weberian religious virtuoso (Weber 1946:287-291).⁸¹ Yet his activist colleagues often share his dietary conscientiousness, thereby helping to create the niche market for ecological and justice-labeled products.

Dinner with Pelle provides a taste of the social world of an ascetic, internationalist, left-oriented activist in today's Sweden. As a coda, let me add that in 1998, in Barrow, England, Pelle was arrested. He was protesting a shipyard that, a decade after the Cold War's end, still builds submarines equipped with nuclear warheads. Once again, food plays a part in the story. Pelle's crime was to enter the shipyard and offer the workers freshly baked bread.

labor and temperance movements. Conscientiousness connoted, among other things, "the control over one's own actions required to change society in an organized way" (Ambjörnsson 1989:59).

⁸¹ Durkheim (1965:355) similarly observes that "the ascetic ideal" may be "incarnated eminently in certain persons, whose specialty, so to speak, it is to represent, almost with excess, this aspect of ritual life."

The practice of utopia

I asked those I interviewed what they meant by solidaritet, and how they would explain the concept to someone who had never heard it before. One of the most comprehensive answers came from Åsa Geivall. Solidarity, she told me, is

together to build a society where the point of departure is all people's equal worth; that all people should have the possibility to be able to live a good life, without the condition of [receiving] charity [välgörenhet]; that there should be extra resources for those with special needs; to not oppress other people; that all people need each other in one way or another; to have understanding for one another's different sides, and to see one another's equal worth; a society of general welfare.

Åsa made clear that this was a vision not only for Sweden but ultimately for the whole world.⁸²

Åsa's impromptu formulation reveals the way in which solidaritet condenses a particular social philosophy. For her and others, the word evokes 1) a normative vision of social interdependence (requiring empathy as well as material sharing); 2) an understanding of the human condition (characterized by vulnerability and equality); and 3) a diagnosis of the sins of their opponents (market mentalities and condescending charity).

It may be appropriate, as this essay comes to a close, to offer my own encapsulation of the solidarity that my Swedish hosts practice and praise. For reasons that I explain below, I call their peculiar variant "existential solidarity." Let me then offer a definition:

⁸² A similar internationalism was expressed by Eva Zetterberg (1991:30), a leader in the Left Party: "For me the Left Party is the only party where international solidarity is as much a matter of course as solidarity with exposed groups in one's own society." The necessary continuity between domestic and foreign policy was also stressed by Olof Palme, but has been largely neglected by his successors.

Existential solidarity is the making of human sacredness by means of

- * connective attention,
- * material sharing,
- * the staging of equality, and
- * the acknowledgment of vulnerability.

I will consider each element in turn.

Connective attention

Practitioners and scholars of solidarity often name attentiveness to others as a sine qua non. Solidarity is "a capacity to identify with others" (identifikationsförmåga), writes Åke Daun (1974:146). It is "feeling insight (inlevelse) and imagination . . . we recognize ourselves in the other," a young woman explained at the conference called "Can we afford solidarity?" That was a Swedish Church conference, and it was particularly in church circles that the ideal of empathy was stressed.⁸³ If, as Martin Luther put it, we human beings are one another's daily bread (Ahlin

1994:193), it is through attention that we feed others and are fed.

The call for empathetic attention to others may be among the most commonplace of moral injunctions -- a plaque in my childhood home bore the bearded admonition not to judge a man "until you have walked a mile in his moccasins" -- but it remains current in the work of leading ethicists. Peter Singer (1993:234), for example, describes ethical individuals as those who can "shift perspective long enough to take themselves, at least for a time, out of the spotlight" (see also Weil 1998:91).⁸⁴ Such acts of attention may involve not

⁸³ It should not be assumed that empathy is an easy art: while our own pain is relentlessly apparent to us, that of other people is elusive and readily disbelieved, Elaine Scarry (1985:4) argues. Even "with the best effort of sustained attention," Scarry writes, we may apprehend only "a shadowy fraction" of another person's experience of pain.

⁸⁴ Shifts of perspective can also be produced in the opposite direction, making the other invisible and the self central. Hannah Arendt (1977:106; see Scarry 1985:58) describes how Heinrich Himmler sought to counteract the instinctive "animal pity" that concentration camp guards might feel toward their victims: "The trick used by Himmler -- who apparently was rather strongly afflicted with these instinctive reactions himself -- was very simple and probably very effective; it consisted in turning these instincts around, as it were, in directing them toward the self. So that instead of saying: What horrible things I did to people!, the murderers would be able to say: What horrible things I had to watch in the pursuance of my duties, how heavily the task weighed upon my shoulders!"

only face-to-face encounters but also mediated connections -- for example, Pelle's knowledge of and concern for those who grow his food.

Attention to others reminds them that they exist and are recognized as existing. Human beings do not merely need material aid, a high-school student active in refugee matters told me, "they want to feel that people are thinking about them." Acts of attention can be "almost physiological in their power of alternation," Elaine Scarry (1985:50) explained in a discussion of support for victims of torture:

An act of human contact and concern . . . provides the hurt person with worldly self-extension: in acknowledging and expressing another person's pain, or in articulating one of his nonbodily concerns while he is unable to, one human being who is well and free willingly turns himself into an image of the other's psychic or sentient claims, an image existing in the space outside the sufferer's body, projected out into the world and held there intact by that person's powers until the sufferer himself regains his own powers of self-extension.

Conversely, inattention is a mark of domination, as Simone Weil (1956:7) observed in a comment about prisoners of war: "In their presence, people move about as if they were not there; they, on their side, running the risk of being reduced to nothing in a single instant, imitate nothingness in their own persons." Being attended to may not mean being regarded as sacred, but it is a necessary step in that direction.

Material sharing

Solidarity is "that we care about (bryr oss om) one another," declared Margot Wallström (1989:5), at the time the Social Democratic government's Minister for Youth Affairs. Such a statement risks sounding hollow, especially when made by a person of prominence and power. As Bourdieu (1977:38-40) has documented, individuals and institutions in modern democratic societies commonly seek to present public-spirited motivations for self-aggrandizing projects. And few Swedish words trumpet public-spiritedness more loudly than solidaritet.

Reacting to the potential for devious rhetoric, journalist Kristina Hultman (1999) asserts that "a solidaristic society is measured not in crocodile tears but

in how power, rights and money are distributed." Her desire for material substantiation of solidaristic avowals makes particular sense if we view solidarity as an act of classification.⁸⁵ Solidarity reclassifies categorical outsiders as part of common humanity, thus bringing them into societal networks of reciprocity and care.⁸⁶ But because the verbal act of declaring solidarity is not reliably credible, it is above all the material act (the movement of resources) that authenticates and makes real the reclassification. To recast Durkheim's (1965:447) famous comment about rites

⁸⁵ For an intriguing comparison, see Edmund Leach's (1965:175-176) discussion of the killing of people and animals: "Killing is a classifying operation. We kill our enemies; we do not kill our friends." Certain animals may be "exterminated at will," while the killing of others proceeds "only according to set rules of time and place and manner." As for people, "killing is a ritual matter, and it is only the ritual which turns yesterday's murder into tomorrow's noblest duty."

⁸⁶ Lars Gustafsson (1964:113) maintains that international solidarity is "a necessary, practically hygienic, act." His invocation of hygiene hints that questions of classification may be at stake, for as Mary Douglas (1966:35) has noted, "dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter."

engendering beliefs (rather than the reverse),⁸⁷ one may say that Pelle doesn't share his income with peasants in Chiapas because he considers them his equals -- he considers them his equals because he shares his income with them.

There is one other method for strong verification of solidarity, and that is personal sacrifice and suffering. (Indeed, the abovementioned transfers of money may be understood as a form of sacrifice.) Pelle alluded to this when he recounted the beginnings of his intensive political engagement. As a youth in Sundsvall, he said, he used to go to the town square on Saturdays to shop for records or clothes. Always present there in the square were some sectarian communists, raising money for various Third World causes. While he did not (and does not) share their particular ideology, their commitment impressed him, and he later thought to himself, as he put it, "Wow, they made a sacrifice that I didn't make."

Costly personal engagement may indeed sometimes outshine material aid as a validation of solidarity. "Our way of being solidaristic is to pay a lot of taxes," Åsa said of her

⁸⁷ "Men do not weep for the dead because they fear them; they fear them because they weep for them" (Durkheim 1965:447; see also 449).

compatriots. "We count our solidarity in money terribly much, alas." Åsa regretted Swedes' "fixation on money," which she found overly abstract and disconnected from real encounters between human beings. Her own work with community groups in Manila was paid for less in kronor than in courage, and during her subsequent speaking tour in Sweden, she recognized the authority that such personal witness had given her.

Notwithstanding her valorization of practical action, Åsa appreciates that the general-welfare society is grounded in a politics of distribution (fördelningspolitik). Through taxation, labor-market policy, and the de-commodification of education and health-care, elected bodies have lessened the clefts between "propertied and pauperized" that Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson lamented in his People's Home speech (quoted in Chapter 4). Such allocation of resources constitutes a diffuse but massive contribution to making all citizens sacred. The writer Jonas Gardell (1993:23) evoked that contribution in a poem, in Swedish, protesting the nation's rightward shift:

I love Sweden. I love the national dental service.

I love the communal music school. I love the health-care center and the library.

I believe that all human beings are of equal worth.

I believe that all should have roughly the same possibilities to acquire education, knowledge and culture.

I believe that we die without beauty. I am a social democrat now when the Social Democrats themselves no longer are.

The staging of equality

Even in a Sweden of egalitarian redistributions, there are great gaps in life circumstances -- particularly after a decade of neoliberalization. For example, between 7,000 and 10,000 people are homeless (Sjöblom 1999; Brattberg 1999). Under such conditions, acts of solidarity often entail the affluent helping the impoverished. The days of the People's Home, when solidarity meant mutual aid between citizens of

roughly equal circumstances, are distant in the past.

Instead, the "contrastive solidarity" between strong and weak that Liedman (1999:88) found in the international arena now also characterizes the domestic scene.

In a world of inequality, solidarity is a staging of equality. By "staging," I mean carrying out activities "for dramatic or public effect" (Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary 1997:1854). Left-leaning Swedes stage equality by acting as if people are equal, even when the larger society does not acknowledge that equality. One example would be Per Herngren's audacious comment, cited in Chapter 2, that one should not assume that immigrants are "better people than Swedes." Herngren acts as if immigrants are equal or even superior in honesty, when many native Swedes assume that immigrants are inferior.

Åsa's kamratprojekt was a particularly dramatic instance of the staging of equality. As mentioned above, the project brought together young Filipinos and Swedes to do community-service work and social criticism in both countries. Most striking to me was the fact that these endeavors were reciprocal: the group investigated possible democracy-enhancing measures in Manila shantytowns, for example, but also in Stockholm suburbs. Such mutuality nearly obliterated

the conventional distinction between savvy First-Worlders offering help and unsophisticated Third-Worlders receiving help. I was familiar with the procession of young graduates who exit the gates of Harvard each June to offer their insights in such places as the Philippines and the Gambia. But before meeting the members of the kamratprojekt, I had never seen an enactment in practice of the clichéd but momentous claim that the citizens of the less-capitalized world have as much to teach us (in super-capitalized Cambridge or Stockholm) as we have to teach them.

Human equality is also staged through a widespread rhetorical practice: the disapproval of "charity" (välgörenhet). "There is no country where charity has a worse name" than in Sweden, bishop Krister Stendahl told me. The comments of those I interviewed supported his assessment. "I feel that charity is some sort of subordination," social worker Rickard Sollman reflected; "it is rather humiliating . . . because it builds on [the notion] that someone must be a victim and the other shall be a helper." In like manner, Johan von Schreeb (the physician quoted in Chapter 2) said, "for my part, charity is just hypocrisy (hyckleri) . . . [it involves] no feeling that one brings about a change."

Charity has long been one of the demons that the champions of solidarity have sought to exorcise. The conceptual confrontation dates back to nineteenth-century France, where among the "Solidarists," as Hayward (1959:281-282) calls them,

it was maintained that merely to aid [destitute] individuals through the traditional Christian channels of charity was approaching impertinence because they had a claim of right, as belonging to a community striving to be both rational and ethical in its conduct towards its citizens.

The transformation of assistance "from a gift to a right" takes place when "all are recognized as potentially needy [and] dependence is no longer the curse of one particular group" (Baldwin 1990:31). This shift of perspective is hard to achieve: far easier is it "to treat the unfortunate person as though catastrophe were his natural vocation" (Weil 1956:35). But by repudiating the legitimacy of charity, von Schreeb, Sollman and their allies insist on such a shift; they speak a proleptic language of human equality,

anticipating the day when soup kitchens will no longer be necessary.⁸⁸

The acknowledgment of vulnerability

"Back of everything is the great spectre of universal death, the all-encompassing blackness," William James (1985:118) once wrote. "Life and its negation are beaten up inextricably together," he added, "but if the life be good, the negation of it must be bad."

It is against the negation of life that the solidarists of Sweden seek to struggle. They bear witness to "the almost unimaginable nakedness and defenselessness" (Agee 1980:102) of the human being, whether the Swedish girl dispatched by a drunk driver or the Bosnian boy orphaned by a Bofors cannon. They construct society as a sheltering power, within which all will have sufficient "access to resources so that they will be able to realize the essential undertakings of human life" (Palme 1990:77). Theirs is an existential solidarity

⁸⁸ In the meantime, however, they do not hesitate to do practical work that might conventionally be called "charitable" -- von Screeb for Doctors Without Borders, Sollman for the City Mission.

because, against the terrible indifference of the universe -- and the still crueler indifference of its earthly inhabitants -- they treat as sacred the fact of our shared existence.

"The sacred character assumed by an object," Durkheim (1965:261) maintained, "is not implied in the intrinsic properties of this latter: it is added to them." Something becomes sacred because large numbers of people act to make it so. (Michel Foucault offered a related argument: "The good does not exist, like that, in an atemporal sky The good is defined by us, it is practiced, it is invented. And this is a collective work" [Bauman 1999a:li].)

Are human beings sacred? An answer of "not necessarily" is suggested by a recent Swedish volume of photographs and philosophical meditations (Andersson et al. 1997). Published by the left-leaning Ordfront cooperative, the book portrays a wide range of human experience, from the blissful (a Parisian couple kissing on the Boulevard Diderot, 1969) and the beautiful (a beefy Bronx fireman performing rescue breathing on an infant, 1964) to the sadistic (colonial British soldiers forcing an Indian to crawl along the road at gunpoint, 1919) and the infernal (a black American being burned alive by a mob of smiling whites, 1919; a German soldier executing a mother and child on a Latvian hillside,

1942; Brazilian ranchers torturing to death an indigenous woman, who hangs upside-down from a tree, 1963). As the book's creators and their Swedish and foreign allies understand, the collective work of making human beings sacred -- unable to be violated with impunity (Durkheim 1965:55) -- remains unfinished.

References

Abella, Irving, and Harold Troper

1991 *None Is Too Many*. Toronto: Lester Publishing.

Agee, James, and Walker Evans

1980 *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Agrell, Wilhelm

1995 Wallenberg inte en av oss. *Dagens Nyheter*, 31 January, B2.

Ahlander, Dag Sebastian

2000 För Amerika i förbund med framtiden. *Svenska Dagbladet*, 29 April.

Ahlin, Lars

1994 *Estetiska essayer*. Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag.

Albons, Birgitta

1993 Razzian kan ge flyktingar livslång skada. *Dagens Nyheter*, 10 December, B20.

Alleyne-Dettmers, P.

1997 Tribal Arts: A Case Study of Global Compression in the Notting Hill Carnival. In *Living the Global City*. J. Eade, ed. London: Routledge.

Almqvist, Annika

2000 Drömmen om det egna huset. Framtiden 2:6-10.

Alsing, Rolf

1997 Sex spelar ingen roll i svensk politik. Aftonbladet,
21 June, 2.

Alton, Peder

1999 Vem tänker på unga och fattiga. Dagens Nyheter, 29
November.

Ambjörnsson, Ronny

1989 The Conscientious Worker: Ideas and Ideals in a
Swedish Working Class Culture. History of European Ideas
10(1):59-67.

1991 The Honest and Diligent Worker. Skeptronhäften 5.
Stockholm: HLS Förlag.

Anderson, Benedict

1991 Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and
Spread of Nationalism. Revised edition. London: Verso.

Anderson, Perry

2000 Editorial. New Left Review 1 (January-February).

Andersson, Roy, Kalle Boman, and István Borbás, eds

1997 Lyckad nedfrysning av Herr Moro. Stockholm: Ordfront
Förlag.

Andersson, Sten

1994 Norge värt allt beröm. *Arbetet*, 18 December, 3.

Andrews, Robert

1993 *The Columbia Dictionary of Quotations*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Annerud, Annika

1999 Polisen vill förbjuda tiggeriet. *Dagens Nyheter*, 7 May.

Arendt, Hannah

1977 *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Revised and enlarged edition. New York: Penguin Books.

Arhén, Gunilla

1999 Svenska chefer är för veka. *Dagens Nyheter*, 14 May.

Arndt, Ulrike

1999 *Solidarity: A Selected Bibliography*. In *Solidarity*. Kurt Bayertz, ed. Pp. 319-335. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Arnstberg, Karl-Olov

1992 Den onde, den gode, den fule - gissa vem som är svensk. *Expressen*, 10 July.

1993 *Den klagande svensken*. Stockholm: Carlssons.

Arter, David

1999 Scandinavian Politics Today. Manchester, UK:
Manchester University Press.

Askman, Torbjörn

1995 Sverige har blivit ett skatteparadis. Dagens Nyheter,
10 June.

Austin, J. L.

1971 A Plea for Excuses. In Philosophy and Linguistics.
Colin Lyas, ed. Pp. 79-101. London: Macmillan.

1975 How to Do Things with Words. J. O. Urmson and Marina
Sbisà, eds. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Austin, Paul Britten

1968 On Being Swedish: Reflections Towards a Better
Understanding of the Swedish Character. Coral Gables,
FL: University of Miami Press.

Baldwin, James

1985 The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction
1948-1985. New York: St. Martin's/Marek.

Baldwin, Peter

1990 The Politics of Social Solidarity: Class Bases of the
European Welfare State 1875-1975. Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt

1999a Culture as Praxis. New Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

1999b In Search of Politics. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Beck, Ulrich

2000 What is Globalization? Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Bell, Daniel

1992 An Interview with Daniel Bell. Harvard Gazette, 30 October, 6.

Bellah, Robert N.

1988 Civil Religion in America. Daedalus 117(3 summer):97-118.

Bellah, Robert N., Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton

1991 The Good Society. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Berman, Marshall

1998 Unchained Melody. The Nation, 11 May, 11-16.

Bjereld, Ulf

1998 Djup könsklyfta i synen på våld. Dagens Nyheter, 24 November.

Bjorklund, Anders, and Richard B. Freeman

- 1994 Generating Equality and Eliminating Poverty, the Swedish Way. NBER Working Paper No. W4945. Cambridge: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Björklund, Marianne

- 1999 Polisen grep 250 personer. Dagens Nyheter, 19 September.

Boëthius, Maria-Pia

- 1991 Heder och samvete: Sverige och andra världskriget. Stockholm: Nordstedts.
- 1999 The End of Prostitution in Sweden? Current Sweden 426 (October):1-4.

Boli, John

- 1989 New Citizens for a New Society: The Institutional Origins of Mass Schooling in Sweden. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre

- 1977 Outline of a Theory of Practice. Richard Nice, trans. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- 1992 Thinking About Limits. In Cultural Theory and Cultural Change. Mike Featherstone, ed. Pp. 37-49. London: SAGE Publications.
- 1998 Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time. Richard Nice, trans. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Boyer, Dean

- 1994 Volvo. In *The Encyclopedia of Consumer Brands*, Vol. 3. Janice Jorgensen, ed. Pp. 604-606. Detroit: St. James Press.

Bratt, Per

- 1997 Marknadens väg till makten. *Dagens Nyheter*, 4 July.

Brattberg, Lisbeth

- 1999 Antalet hemlösa fortsatt högt. *Dagens Nyheter*, 19 August.
- 2000 Svensk trafiksäkerhet bäst i Europa. *Dagens Nyheter*, 7 July.

Bråkenhielm, Carl Reinhold

- 1994 Christian Tradition and Contemporary Society. *Concilium* 256:23-34.

Broberg, Gunnar, and Mattias Tydén

- 1996 Eugenics in Sweden: Efficient Care. In *Eugenics and the Welfare State*. Gunnar Broberg and Nils Roll-Hansen, eds. Pp. 77-149. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press.

Brown-Humes, Christopher

- 1999 Globalization Threatens Idealism: Sweden. *Financial Times*, 6 December, 4.

Brune, Ylva

1992 Svensk sexualitet mer respekt än dyrkan. Ottar
2:75-82.

Buckard, Olof

1994 Lämna allt och stanna kvar. Rättvikskonferens.
Rättvik, 18 November.

Buckser, Andrew

1996 Communities of Faith: Sectarianism, Identity, and
Social Change on a Danish Island. Oxford, UK: Berghahn
Books.

Burke, Al

1994 "It Could Always Be Better": The Unofficial National
Motto of Sweden. The Swedish Example 1(1 Autumn):15.

1995a Howitzers and Hypocrites. The Swedish Example 2(1
Spring):12.

1995b Things by Their Right Names. The Swedish Example 2(1
Spring):1-10.

Childs, Marquis

1961 Sweden: The Middle Way. 25th anniversary edition. New
Haven: Yale University Press.

Cohen-Cruz, Jan, ed

1998 Radical Street Performance: An International
Anthology. London: Routledge.

Cowie, Peter

1985 Swedish Cinema, from Ingeborg Holm to Fanny and Alexander. Stockholm, Sweden: The Swedish Institute.

Croall, Stephen

2000 A New Swedish Model: Safe, Clean Food. Scandinavian Review 87(3 Winter):25-32.

Dagbladet Nya Samhället

1997 Gärna cirkus, men utan djur. Dagbladet Nya Samhället, 3 June, 1.

Dagens Nyheter

2000 Moderat kritik mot v-"moralist." Dagens Nyheter, 30 June.

Dagens SverigeNytt

1998 Robin Hood-tjänsteman på bank i Boden. Dagens SverigeNytt, 12 October.

1999a Dementa drogas för att dölja vårdens personalbrist. Dagens SverigeNytt, 7 June.

1999b Marknaden ger nye finansministern underkänt. Dagens SverigeNytt, 15 April.

2000 Ett av fem bibliotek har lagts ner sedan 1988. Dagens SverigeNytt, 27 July.

Dagerman, Stig

1971 Att döda ett barn. In Läsebok för invandrare. Marianne Mathlein, ed. Pp. 73-74. Stockholm: Läromedelsförlagen.

Dahl, Gudrun

- 1998 Wildflowers, Nationalism and the Swedish Law of Commons. *Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion* 2(3 December):282-302.

Dahl, Hans Fredrik

- 1986 Those Equal Folk. In *Norden -- The Passion of Equality*. Stephen R. Graubard, ed. Pp. 97-111. Oslo: Norwegian University Press.

Dahlgren, Katarina

- 1999 Segregering muras in i grunden. *Dagens Nyheter*, 15 August.

Danielsson, Tage

- 1985 Tage Danielsson. Hans Alfredson, ed. *Svalans Svenska Klassiker*. Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag.

Daun, Åke

- 1974 Solidaritet och social struktur. In *Samhällsförändringar och brottslighet*. Åke Daun, Bengt Börjeson and Stig Åhs, eds. Pp. 145-155. Stockholm: Tidens Förlag/Folksam.
- 1991a Are Swedes as Cold as They Seem to Be? *Kungliga Vitterhets Historie Och Antikvitets Akademiens Konferenser* 21.
- 1991b Pathology of Nationhood. Example: Sweden. *Innovation in Social Sciences Research* 4(1):107-117.

1994 Svensk mentalitet. Ett jämförande perspektiv.

Revised second edition. Stockholm: Rabén Prisma.

1996 Swedish Mentality. Jan Teeland, trans. University
Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Denitch, Bogdan

1991 From Sweden to Socialism: Comment. Dissent, Winter,
103-105.

Denzin, Norman K.

1997 Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for
the 21st Century. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Douglas, Mary

1966 Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of
Pollution and Taboo. New York: Praeger.

1986 How Institutions Think. Syracuse, NJ: Syracuse
University Press.

1996 Thought Styles: Critical Essays on Good Taste.
London: Sage Publications.

Durkheim, Emile

1965 The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. Joseph
Ward Swain, trans. New York: The Free Press.

Eagleton, Terry

1992 The Significance of Theory. Oxford: Blackwell.

Economist, The

1999a Disharmonious. The Economist, 6 March, 60.

1999b The Poetry of Motion. The Economist, 11 September,
31-32.

Ehrenberg, Johan

1996 Pojkreklam. OBS, 26 November.

Eisenhower, Dwight D.

1961 Public Papers of the Presidents, Dwight D. Eisenhower
1960-1961. Item 246, 27 July. P. 605. CDex Information
Group, Inc.

Ekelund, Mats

1999 Varning -- livet kan leda till döden! En kritik av
nollvisioner. Pejling series, vol. 21. Stockholm:
Timbro.

Elander, Hedvig

2000 Stopp för sexbrev i riksdagen. Aftonbladet, 5 July.

Elmér, Åke

1995 Sverige. In Nationalencyklopedin. Christer Engström,
ed. Pp. 499-537. Höganäs, Sweden: Bokförlaget Bra
Böcker.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo

1968 Essays. New York: AMS Press.

Enquist, Per Olov

- 1986 On the Art of Flying Backward with Dignity. In Norden
-- The Passion for Equality. Stephen R. Graubard, ed.
Pp. 65-78. Oslo, Norway: Norwegian University Press.

Esping-Andersen, Gösta

- 2000 Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism. In The Welfare
State: A Reader. Christopher Pierson and Francis G.
Castles, eds. Pp. 154-169. Cambridge, United Kingdom:
Polity Press.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E.

- 1940 The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood
and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People. Oxford:
Clarendon Press.

Faludi, Susan

- 1996 Swedish Sojourn. Ms. 6 (5 March/April):64-71.

Flodr, Hanna

- 1999 Porr får inte bli normalt. Dagens Nyheter, 22 July.

Ford, Peter

- 1999 Europe Puts Mute on Kid Ads. The Christian Science
Monitor, 16 December, 1.

Forslund, Petter

- 1999 Sämre för barnen på 90-talet. Dagens Nyheter, 9
November.

Frank, Robert H.

1985 *Choosing the Right Pond: Human Behavior and the Quest for Status*. New York: Oxford University Press.

1999 *Luxury Fever: Why Money Fails to Satisfy in an Era of Excess*. New York: The Free Press.

Freiburg, Jeanne

1993 *Counting Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in the Swedish Welfare State*. *Scandinavian Studies* 65(2):226-236.

Freud, Sigmund

1961 *The Future of an Illusion*. James Strachey, trans. New York: W. W. Norton.

Friedman, Thomas L.

2000 *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. New York: Anchor Books.

Gardell, Jonas

1993 *Jag älskar Sverige*. Etc 2:23.

Gaunt, David

1985 *Den kungliga svenska avundsjukan*. In *Myter om svensken*. David Gaunt and Orvar Löfgren, eds. Pp. 102-110. Stockholm: LiberFörlag.

Geertz, Clifford

1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.

2000 Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Ghazvinian, John

2000 Dancing in the Streets. The Nation, 24 April, 23.

Giertta, Cecilia

1999 Tio största äger nästan halva börsen. Dagens Nyheter, 10 April.

Granestrånd, Lasse

2000 Film om porr chockerar. Dagens Nyheter, 14 February.

Guillou, Jan

1997 Svenska direktörer får inga jobb utomlands. Aftonbladet, 19 May.

Gullestad, Marianne

1991 The Scandinavian Version of Egalitarian Individualism. Ethnologia Scandinavica 21:3-18.

1992 The Art of Social Relations: Essays on Culture, Social Action and Everyday Life in Modern Norway. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.

Gustafsson, Lars

1964 *The Public Dialogue in Sweden*. Claude Stephenson, trans. Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag.

Gustafsson, Torbjörn

1995 *Mamma är död*. Dagens Nyheter, 2 August, A1.

Gyllensten, Lars

1965 *Ten Commandments*. In *Sweden Writes: Contemporary Swedish Poetry and Prose, Views on Art, Literature and Society*. Lars Bäckström and Göran Palm, eds. Pp. 226-228. Stockholm: Prisma/Swedish Institute.

Habermas, Jürgen

1989 *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence, trans. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Hagman, Olle

1999 *Bilen, naturen och det moderna: om natursynens omvandlingar i det svenska bilsamhället*. Ph.D. dissertation. Gothenburg: Dept. of Social Anthropology, University of Gothenburg.

Hall, Peter

1998 *Cities in Civilization: Culture, Innovation, and Urban Order*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolsen.

Hannerz, Ulf

1996 Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places.
London: Routledge.

Hansson, Sven Ove, and Lars Olof Pettersson

1992 Värderingar om frihet, jämlikhet och solidaritet.
Stockholm: Utbildningsförlaget Brevskolan.

Hartman, Sven

1986 Barns tankar om livet. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur.

Haste, Hans, ed

1986 Kärleksbrev till Olof Palme. Stockholm: Bokförlaget
Prisma/Tidens Förlag.

Haste, Hans, Lars Erik Olsso, and Lars Strandberg, eds

1986 Boken om Olof Palme: hans liv, hans gärning, hans
död. Stockholm: Tiden.

Hayward, J. E. S.

1959 Solidarity: The Social History of an Idea in
Nineteenth Century France. International Review of
Social History 4(2).

Heclo, Hugh, and Henrik Madsen

1987 Policy and Politics in Sweden: Principled Pragmatism.
Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Hedström, Ingrid

- 1994 EU-praktik bra start på karriären. Dagens Nyheter, På Jobbet Section, 20 March, 1.

Heilbroner, Robert

- 1989 Reflections: The Triumph of Capitalism. The New Yorker, 23 January.
- 1991 From Sweden to Socialism: A Small Symposium on Big Questions. Dissent, Winter, 96-110.
- 1993 Does Socialism Have a Future? The Nation, 27 September, 312-315.
- 1997 Economics by the Book. The Nation, 20 October, 16-19.

Heintz, Jim

- 1998 Swedish Election Sorts Out. The Washington Post, 21 September.

Helgesson, Stefan

- 1996 Så blev jag till sist svensk. Dagens Nyheter, 21 June, B1.

Hendin, Herbert

- 1964 Suicide and Scandinavia: A Psychoanalytic Study of Culture and Character. New York: Grune & Stratton.

Herlitz, Gilles

- 1991 Svenskar: Hur vi är och varför vi är som vi är. Uppsala: Uppsala Konsultförlag.

Hermele, Kenneth

1992 The New Terms of Solidarity: A Swedish Perspective.
Southern Africa Report, May, 31-33.

1993 The End of a Road: Swedish Social Democracy and Third
World Solidarity. In Social Democracy in Latin America:
Prospects for Change. Menno Vellinga, ed. Pp. 61-81.
Boulder: Westview Press.

Herzfeld, Michael

1985 The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a
Cretan Mountain Village. Princeton: Princeton University
Press.

1987 Posturing as a Social Poetic: A Reply to Damer.
Critique of Anthropology 7:77-80.

1992 The Social Production of Indifference: Exploring the
Symbolic Roots of Western Bureaucracy. New York: Berg.

1993 In Defiance of Destiny: The Management of Time and
Gender at a Cretan Funeral. American Ethnologist
20(2):241-255.

1997a Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation
State. New York: Routledge.

1997b Portrait of a Greek Imagination: An Ethnographic
Biography of Andreas Nenedakis. Chicago: The University
of Chicago Press.

1999 Playful Subversions: Troping with Authority. Annual
Meeting of the American Anthropological Association.
Chicago, 20 November.

Hirdman, Yvonne

- 1989 Att lägga livet till rätta. Studier i svensk folkhemspolitik. Stockholm: Carlsson Bokförlag.

Hitchens, Christopher

- 1989 Minority Report. The Nation, 30 January, 116.
1993 Minority Report. The Nation, 12 April, 474.

Hopkins, Karen

- 1977 Sweden: Focus on Post-Industrialism. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Huldt, Bo, et al.

- 1980 Sweden in World Society: Thoughts About the Future. M. F. Metcalf, trans. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Hultman, Kristina

- 1999 Ett litet mästerverk. Review of Sven-Eric Liedman's Att se sig själv i andra -- om solidaritet. Dagens Nyheter, 17 August.

Huntford, Roland

- 1971 The New Totalitarians. London: Allen Lane.

Huxley, Aldous

- 1932 Brave New World. London: Harper.

Jacobsson, Göran

- 1996 Direktörernas löner drar ifrån. Dagens Nyheter, 11 June, C1.

Jakobson, Roman

1960 Linguistics and Poetics. In *Style in Language*. Thomas A. Seboek, ed. Pp. 350-377. Cambridge: MIT Press.

James, William

1985 *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Jäderberg, Daniel

1997 Han är stolt över att kallas extremist. *Dagbladet Nya Samhället*, 3 July, 16-17.

Jeffner, Anders

1988 *Livsåskådningar i Sverige*. Inledning projektpresentation och översiktlig resultredovisning. Uppsala: Department of Theology, Uppsala University.

Jewert, Jenny

2000 Citypolisen: åklagaren saboterar nya lagen. *Aftonbladet*, 6 January.

Johansson, Lars

1994 Eritreas barn smälte iskungens hjärta. *Dagens Nyheter*, 24 December, A6.

Jonsson, Gunnar

2000 Nakna damer ger klirr i kassan. *Dagens Nyheter*, 9 January.

Kant, Immanuel

1959 Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals.
Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill.

Karlsson, Gösta

1996 Snårig märkning ger ingen hjälp. Dagens Nyheter, 17
June, A5.

Katsiaficas, George

1997 The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous
Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday
Life. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press
International.

Kågeson, Per

2000 Jeeparna måste totalförbjudas. Dagens Nyheter, 30
January.

Keillor, Garrison

1985 Lake Wobegon Days. New York: Viking.

Keller, Awiwa

1996 Är du lönsam, lilla vän? Dagens Nyheter, 9 June, C1.

Koblik, Steven

1975 Sweden's Development from Poverty to Affluence.
Steven Koblik, ed. Joanne Johnson and Steven Koblik,
trans. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

1988 The Stones Cry Out: Sweden's Response to the Persecution of the Jews, 1933-1945. New York: Holocaust Library.

Kohn, Alfie

1992 No Contest: The Case Against Competition. Revised edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Kowalik, Tadeusz

1993 Can Poland Afford the Swedish Model? Dissent, Winter, 88-96.

Kratz, Anita

1996 Ingvar Carlsson: Erlanders siste pojke. Stockholm: Bonnier Alba.

Krebs, Michelle

1999 The Man Who Buckled up the World. New York Times, 24 January, 1 (Section 12).

Lancaster, Roger N.

1992 Life is Hard: Machismo, Danger, and the Intimacy of Power in Nicaragua. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Larsson, Per-Ola

1999 Handikappade riskerar att deporteras. Dagens Nyheter, 16 August.

Lasch, Christopher

1991 The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics.
New York: Norton.

1995 The Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of
Democracy. New York: Norton.

Leach, Edmund

1965 The Nature of War. Disarmament and Arms Control
3(2):165-183.

Lennerhed, Lena

1994 Frihet att njuta. Sexualdebatten i Sverige på
1960-talet. Stockholm: Norstedts.

Leonhardt, David

2000 Executive Pay Drops Off the Political Radar. The New
York Times, 16 April, Section 4, p. 5.

Levine, Paul A.

1996 From Indifference to Activism: Swedish Diplomacy and
the Holocaust, 1938-1944. Ph.D. dissertation. Studia
Historica Upsaliensia 178, Uppsala: University of
Uppsala.

Lidman, Sara

1999 Intervju. Sara Lidman. Dagens Nyheter, 17 April.

Liedman, Sven-Eric

1999 Att se sig själv i andra: om solidaritet. Stockholm:
Bonnier Essä.

Lincoln, Abraham

- 1953 The Gettysburg Address. In The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln. Roy P. Basler, ed. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Lincoln, Bruce

- 1996 Theses on Method. Method & Theory in the Study of Religion 8 (3):225-227.

Linder, P. J., Anders

- 1997 Bilen, friheten och makten. Timbro Idag 7 (September):2.

Lindqvist, Herman

- 1999 Det behövs ett nytt folkhem. Aftonbladet, 2 May.

Lindqvist, Sven

- 1992 Natten är lång. Dagens Nyheter, 5 May, B2.

Lindroth, Bengt

- 1994 Sverige och odjuret. En essä om den goda svenska traditionen. Stockholm: Moderna Tider.

Linnér, Birgitta

- 1967 Sex and Society in Sweden. New York: Pantheon Books.

Lisinski, Stefan

- 1995 Långt liv i välmående förort. Dagens Nyheter, 22 September.

Ljunggren, Stig-Björn

- 1992 Folkhemskapitalismen. Högerns programutveckling under efterkrigstiden. Stockholm: Tiden.

Lodeinius, Anna-Lena, and Per Wikström

- 1998 Veganer trappar upp våldet. Svenska Dagbladet, 27 September.

Löfgren, Orvar

- 1987 Deconstructing Swedishness: Culture and Class in Modern Sweden. In *Anthropology at Home*. Anthony Jackson, ed. Pp. 74-93. London: Tavistock Publications.
- 1993 Materializing the Nation in Sweden and America. *Ethnos* 58 (3-4):161-196.
- 1999 On Holiday: A History of Vacationing. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Löfvenhaft, Sören

- 1999 Dödsolyckor i trafiken kartläggs. Dagens Nyheter, 9 February.

Lundén, Rolf, and Erik Åsard, eds.

- 1992 Networks of Americanization: Aspects of the American Influence in Sweden. *Studia Anglistica Upsaliensia*, Vol. 79. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Lundgren, Bruno

- 1993 För Sverige -- in i framtiden. Expressen, 3 January, 20.

Lundqvist, Åke

1999 Riddaren av det fria ordet. Dagens Nyheter, 10 April.

Luthersson, Peter

1998 Ett tidningsföretag arbetar som förvaltare av
offentligheten. Svenska Dagbladet, 16 August.

Maeder, Jay

1997 Death Warmed Over. U.S. News & World Report, 29
September, 12.

Maggio, Rosalie

1996 The New Beacon Book of Quotations by Women. Boston:
Beacon Press.

Magnusson, Jane

1995 Man älskar sin hustru men lyxhustrun älskar man med.
Dagens Nyheter [På Stan], 21-27 July.

Malaby, Thomas M.

1999 Fateful Misconceptions: Rethinking Paradigms of
Chance Among Gamblers in Crete. Social Analysis 43(1
March):141-163.

Marx, Karl

1963 Karl Marx: Early Writings. T. B. Bottomore, ed. and
trans. London: C. A. Watts.

Mason, Andrew

1998 Solidarity. In Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy.
Edward Craig, ed. Pp. 23-24. London: Routledge.

Mauss, Marcel

1990 The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic
Societies. W.D. Halls, trans. New York: W.W. Norton.

Månsson, Sven-Axel

1993 Cultural Conflict and the Swedish Sexual Myth: The
Male Immigrant's Encounter with Swedish Sexual and
Cohabitation Culture. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Mcguire, Stryker

2000 Entrepreneur's Disease. Newsweek, 7 February, 59.

Mcguire, Stryker, and Ginanne Brownell

2000 Shining Stockholm. Newsweek, 7 February, 52-59.

McLaughlin, Kim R.

2000 Dyrt att avstå från porr. Dagens Nyheter, 2 August.

Meeri, Tiina, and Helena Nordenberg

2000 Torsken: 1000 spänn för franskt med er båda.
Aftonbladet, 6 January.

Mellin, Lena

2000 Vård har blivit en klassfråga. Aftonbladet, 9
February.

Metro

1995 Illgröna kepsar till ettagluttare. Metro, 16 August, 4.

Metz, Karl H.

1999 Solidarity and History: Institutions and Social Concepts of Solidarity in 19th Century Western Europe. *In Solidarity*. Kurt Bayertz, ed. Pp. 191-207. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Miller, Daniel

1997 Capitalism: An Ethnographic Approach. Oxford: Berg.

Milner, Henry

1989 Sweden: Social Democracy in Practice. New York: Oxford University Press.
1994 Social Democracy and Rational Choice: The Scandinavian Experience and Beyond. London: Routledge.

Misgeld, Klaus, Karl Molin, and Klas Åmark, eds

1993 Creating Social Democracy: A Century of the Social Democratic Labor Party in Sweden. University Park, PA: Penn State Press.

Mitchell, John Hanson

1998 Trespassing: An Inquiry Into the Private Ownership of Land. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.

Moberg, Eva X

- 1998 Påsmänniskorna - de enda som protesterar.
Aftonbladet, 13 November.

Moore, Sally Falk

- 1986 Social Facts and Fabrications. Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press.

Moore, Sally Falk, ed

- 1993 Moralizing States and the Ethnography of the Present.
American Ethnological Society Monograph no. 5.
Arlington, VA: American Anthropological Association.

Mortensen, Per

- 1999 En av tre vill inte bevaka vägarna. Dagens Nyheter, 5
November.

Mosey, Chris

- 1991 Cruel Awakening: Sweden and the Killing of Olof
Palme. London: Hurst & Company.

Möller, Jens

- 1995 Svenska vapen skapar flyktingar. Pockettidningen R
25(5):77-83.

Nationalencyklopedin

- 1995 Solidaritet. Höganäs, Sweden: Bra Böcker.

Nationalencyklopedins ordbok

- 1996 Solidaritet. Höganäs, Sweden: Bra Böcker.

Nationalföreningen för Trafiksäkerhetens Främjande

1998 Skyll inte allt på bilisterna -- bygg säkrare vägar!

Press release. Stockholm: Nationalföreningen för
Trafiksäkerhetens Främjande.

1999 Varning för de livsfarliga terrängbilarna. Säker
Trafik, 15 November.

Needham, Rodney

1972 Belief, Language, and Experience. Oxford: Blackwell.

New York Times

1996 The First Families of Scandinavian Business. New York
Times, 12 May, F12.

Norlin, Margareta

1994 Barnets århundrade: vart tog det vägen? Stockholm:
Rabén & Sjögren.

Nott, Kathleen

1961 A Clean, Well-Lighted Place: A Private View of
Sweden. London: Heinemann.

Ohlander, Ann-Sofie

1992 The Invisible Child: The Struggle Over Social
Democratic Family Policy. In Creating Social Democracy:
A Century of the Social Democratic Labor Party in
Sweden. Klaus Misgeld, Karl Molin and Klas Åmark, eds.
University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University
Press.

Olsson, Lova

1998 Hemlösa kan få bo i baracker. Svenska Dagbladet, 19 August.

Olsson, Sven E.

1990 Social Policy and Welfare State in Sweden. Lund: Arkiv Förlag.

Orfali, Kristina

1991 The Rise and Fall of the Swedish Model. Arthur Goldhammer, trans. In *A History of Private Life*. Antoine Prost and Gérard Vincent, eds. Pp. 417-433. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Oxford English Dictionary

1989 Solidarity. Vol. XV. J. A. Simpson and E. S. Weiner, C., eds. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

O'Dell, Tom

1997 Culture Unbound: Americanization and Everyday Life in Sweden. Lund: Nordic Academic Press.

Öhrström, Lillian

1994 Samma starka rädsla drabbar oss alla. Dagens Nyheter, 1 October, A9.

1997 Svenska kvinnor jämlikast. Dagens Nyheter, 8 March.

Österholm, Ulla-Lene

2000 Svenska barn har det bäst i världen. Aftonbladet, 13 June.

Palme, Lisbet

1994 Speech awarding the Olof Palme Memorial Prize.
University of Stockholm, 31 January.

Palme, Olof

1990 Socialism, Peace and Solidarity: Selected Speeches of Olof Palme. E. S. Reddy, ed. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Palmer, Brian C. W.

1995 "Euroclass" Sweden and Its Dissenters: Defending Civic Bonds in an Age of Economic Preoccupation. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Washington, DC, November.

1996a "Euroclass" Sweden and Its Dissenters: Creative Irreverence in the Defense of Civic Bonds. In *The Story of Progress*. Gösta Arvastson and Mats Lindqvist, eds. *Studia Ethnologica Upsaliensia*, Vol. 17. Pp. 43-47. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

1996b *The Struggle for Sweden's Soul: Moral Engagement and Identity in a Post-Christian Society*. Licentiate thesis. Uppsala, Sweden: University of Uppsala.

1996c Svensken som drömde amerikanskt. Dagens Nyheter, 28 February, B1.

In press Sweden. In *Countries and Their Cultures*. Melvin Ember and Carol R. Ember, eds. Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference.

Palmgren, Nils

1994 Fem frågor till Östen Mäkitalo. Dagens Nyheter, 22 November, A5.

Parenti, Michael

1997 *Blackshirts and Reds: Rational Fascism and the Overthrow of Communism*. San Francisco: City Lights Books.

Peebles, Gustav

1997 *The Crown Capitulates: The Interplay Between Currency and Identity*. Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Washington, DC, 19 November.

Peterson, Abby

1997 *Neo-Sectarianism and Rainbow Coalitions: Youth and the Drama of Immigration in Contemporary Sweden*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing.

Pettersson, Daniel

2000 Goda tider bara för vissa. Dagens Nyheter, 16 June.

Pettersson, Jesper

1998 Demokratin låter djur dö. Dagens Nyheter, 8 October.

Pettersson, Thorleif

1994 Svensk mentalitet i internationellt perspektiv. In Ungdomars välfärd och värderingar. Statens offentliga utredningar. SOU 1994:73. Stockholm: Civildepartementet.

Phillips, Michael

1989 DisCourses. San Francisco: Clear Glass Publishing.

Pollock, Sarah

1998 Stephanie Coontz. Mother Jones, May/June, 31-33.

Popenoe, David

1988 Disturbing the Nest: Family Change and Decline in Modern Societies. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

1991 Family Decline in the Swedish Welfare State. The Public Interest 102:65-77.

Pred, Allan

1995 Recognizing European Modernities: A Montage of the Present. London: Routledge.

Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary

1997 Second edition. New York: Random House.

Reichwald, Astrid

1999 Löneklyftorna blir allt större. Dagens Nyheter, 31 May.

Reisman, David

1982 *State and Welfare: Tawney, Galbraith and Adam Smith.*
London: Macmillan.

Roosevelt, Franklin D.

1936 Excerpts from the Press Conference. *In The*
Presidential Papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1936. Item
79, June 23. CDex Information Group, Inc.

Rothstein, Bo

1996 *The Social Democratic State: The Swedish Model and*
the Bureaucratic Problem of Social Reform. Pittsburgh,
PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Runyan, Anne Sisson

1999 *Women in the Neoliberal 'Frame.'* *In Gender Politics*
in Global Governance. Mary K. Meyer and Elisabeth Prügl,
eds. Pp. 210-220. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman &
Littlefield.

Ruth, Arne

1986 *The Second New Nation: The Mythology of Modern*
Sweden. *In Norden -- The Passion for Equality.* Stephen
R. Graubard, ed. Pp. 240-282. Oslo: Norwegian University
Press.

1988 *Is Sweden a European Country?* Kjersti Board, trans.
Scandinavian Review, Spring, 7-14.

Saint-Agnès, Yves de

1966 Introduction. In *The Erotic Minorities*. Lars Ullerstam. Pp. v-xix. New York: Grove Press.

Sandell, Maria

1995 För Ulrika krympte världen. *Lutherhjälpen* 48 (4 November-December):3.

Sander

1994 Sverige ska rädda världen. *Dagens Nyheter*, 6 November, A2.

Sandström, Bosse

1999a Han fick sparken -- och 17 miljoner. *Dagens Nyheter*, 26 December.

1999b Vi var nyfikna - på sex. *Aftonbladet*, 5 December.

Scarry, Elaine

1985 *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Schröder, Stephan M.

1997 More Fun with Swedish Girls? Functions of a German Heterostereotype. *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 27:122-137.

Schück, Johan

2000 Offentliga utgifter nu på lägsta nivå. *Dagens Nyheter*, 1 April.

Schwandt, Thomas A.

1997 *Qualitative Inquiry: A Dictionary of Terms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Scott, Franklin D.

1988 *Sweden: The Nation's History*. Enlarged edition. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Scott, James C.

1990 *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Sekund, Bodil Bjerre

1999 Löneskillnader tillbaka på 50-talets nivå. Dagens Nyheter, 16 April.

Selden, Raman

1991 *The Rhetoric of Enterprise*. In *Enterprise Culture*. Russell Keat and Nicholas Abercrombie, eds. Pp. 58-71. London: Routledge.

Singer, Daniel

1999 *Whose Millennium? Theirs or Ours?* New York: Monthly Review Press.

Singer, Peter

1993 *How Are We to Live? Ethics in an Age of Self-Interest*. Melbourne: The Text Publishing Company.

Sjöblom, Anita

1999 Tolvhundra svenskar är uteliggare. Dagens Nyheter, 31 August.

Sjökvist, Elisabeth

1994 Äntligen kan sara gå i hörselklass. Dagens Nyheter, 14 January, D1.

Sjöström, Gustav

1924 Solidaritet i teori och praxis. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Brand.

Skagermark, Pia

1994 Hård strid om eurokondom. Dagens Nyheter, 7 June.

Social Democratic Party

1994 Parliamentary election campaign film. Channel 4. 5 September.

Sontag, Susan

1969 Letter from Sweden. Ramparts, July, 23-38.

Söderberg, Håkan

1999 Utlandsflykten bara en bluff. Avisen, 13 March.

Södersten, Bo

1995 Politisk korruption förstör landet. Dagens Nyheter, 28 January.

2000 Rimliga vd-löner. Dagens Nyheter, 25 June.

Steen-Johnsson, Cecilia

1994 Vi är bäst på att utvisa flyktingar. Dagens Nyheter,
20 January, B1.

Steinvall, Anders

1998 Tjejer är troféer för idolerna. Dagens Nyheter, 16
November.

Stenelo, L.G.

1984 The International Critic: The Impact of Swedish
Criticism of the U.S. Involvement in Vietnam. Lund:
Studentlitteratur.

Strindlund, Pelle

1995 Militanta tanter. Nfl-Information 42 (19 October):12.
1996 Djurförtryck, kvinnoförtryck och rasförtryck: kan en
ung vänstrare äta kött? Rak Vänster 1:18-20.

Svenska Dagbladet

1995 Svenska barn har bäst tänder. Svenska Dagbladet, 17
December.
1998 Moder Teresas nunnor vill öppna soppkök och
natthärbärge på Södermalm i Stockholm. Svenska
Dagbladet, 8 August.

Svensson, Gert

1998a Kränkta pojkar söker tröst i sex. Dagens Nyheter, 5
October.
1998b Sexmissbrukande män får hjälp. Dagens Nyheter, 3
October.

2000 De föraktar svenska tjejer. Dagens Nyheter, 18 February.

Svensson, Göran

1988 Utländska bilder av Sverige. Bespeglingar i det moderna. In Sverige. Vardag och struktur. Ulf Himmelstrand and Göran Svensson, eds. Pp. 139-161. Stockholm: Norstedts.

Sverne, Tor

1993 Children's Rights in Scandinavia in a Legal and Historical Perspective. Family and Conciliation Courts Review 31(3 July):299-312.

Swedish Institute

1996 Child Care. Fact sheets on Sweden series. Stockholm: The Swedish Institute.

Sydsvenska Dagbladet

1993 Tyvärr, Sten Andersson. Sydsvenska Dagbladet, 1 September.

Tannen, Deborah

1989 Talking Voices: Repetition, Dialogue and Imagery in Conversational Discourse. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå

1999a Kritik mot kyrko-fallskärmar. Dagens Nyheter, 19 December.

1999b Persson kritiserar SVT-fallskärm. Dagens Nyheter, 10 March.

2000 Unga struntar allt oftare i facket. Dagens Nyheter, 6 March.

Timbro Idag

1999 Varning -- livet kan leda till döden! En kritik av nollvisioner. Timbro Idag 5 (July-August):4.

Tingsten, Herbert

1973 The Swedish Social Democrats: Their Ideological Development. Greta Frankel and Patricia Howard-Rosen, trans. Totowa, NJ: Bedminster Press.

Tomasson, Richard F.

1970 Sweden: Prototype of Modern Society. New York: Random House.

1998 Alcohol and Alcohol Control in Sweden. Scandinavian Studies 70(4):477-508.

Trägårdh, Lars

1999 Welfare State Nationalism: Sweden and the Specter of the European Union. Scandinavian Review 87(1 Spring/Summer):18-23.

Triandis, Harry C.

1995 Individualism and Collectivism. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Turner, Victor

1974 *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Ullerstam, Lars

1966 *The Erotic Minorities*. Anselm Hollo, trans. New York: Grove Press.

UNICEF

1997 *The State of the World's Children 1997*. New York: Oxford University Press.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

1999 *Human Development Report 1999*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Vänsterpartiet

1993 *The Party Program: For a World in Solidarity*. Adopted by the Left Party Congress. Stockholm: Vänsterpartiet.

Vico, Giambattista

1984 *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Volvo Cars North America Inc.

1998 *The Volvo Preview*. Advertising circular.

Wadendal, Ia

1999a Vägverket ljuger om säkerhet. Dagens Nyheter, 20 December.

1999b Verklighetens olycka avslöjar orsaken. Dagens Nyheter, 25 September.

Wallner, Jacques

1993 Lillebror Norge tar över. Dagens Nyheter, 15 September.

2000 Feghet hindrar fartsänkning. Dagens Nyheter, 29 January.

Wallström, Margot

1989 Förord. In Den röda knappen. Ungdomars berättelser om kamp och solidaritet. Thomas Danielsson and Elisabeth Rinman, eds. Stockholm: Nordan comunidad.

Wärneryd, Karl-Erik

1983 Skattebetalarnas psykologi. In Välfärdsstatens psykologi. Torgny T. Segerstedt, ed. Pp. 97-118. Stockholm: Ratio.

Weber, Max

1946 From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. New York: Oxford University Press.

Weil, Simone

1956 The Iliad or the Poem of Force. Wallingford, PA:
Pendle Hill.

1998 Simone Weil. Eric O. Springsted, ed. Maryknoll, NY:
Orbis Books.

Wennerberg, Tor

1997 Sterilization and Propaganda. New Left Review 226
(November/December).

Westander, Henrik

1995 På flykt från svenska vapen. Barnen & Vi 6:18-19.

Westmar, Bo

2000 HSB-skrapa bara för rika. Dagens Nyheter, 30 April.

World Press Review

1999 Prostitution: Different Approaches. World Press
Review, May, 20.

Wrede, Gunnar

1996 Nya välfärdsförsäkringar för 30 miljarder. Dagens
Industri, 31 October.

Yapp, Peter, ed.

1983 The Travellers' Dictionary of Quotation: Who Said
What, About Where? London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Z, Carl

1995 Vad är det för särskilt med det här? Det
mångkulturella: verkligheten, politiken och praktiken
[conference]. Stockholm: City Conference Center, 19
January.

Zebrowski, John

2000 Seattle Measure Tries to Tame Circus Acts. Boston
Globe, 29 January, A3.

Zetterberg, Eva

1991 Solidaritet, ett otidsenligt ord? *In* Tankar från
vänster. Pp. 26-30. Stockholm: Vänsterpartiet.